

NEW LINKS WITH SHAKESPEARE

by

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F S A, F R H I S T S



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INTRODUCTION

THE documents upon which this book is chiefly based were found in 1925, whilst I was engaged in arranging and calendaring a small collection of which Captain—now Sir—Offley Wakeman, Bart, had then recently become possessed

This collection, together with some old ledgers, had been kept in a large chest which for many years had been lying in an upper room at Hanley Court, in the parish of Hanley William, near Tenbury, co Worcester The chest had been thus left when the present house, of which the main portion dates from the middle of the eighteenth century, became tenantless, and still so remains, in 1923 In that year the house, together with the surrounding estate of 1500 acres, had descended to Sir Offley Wakeman, through his connection with the family of Newport of Hanley Court It was the wish of the new owner that if the documents proved to possess any special interest they should be made accessible to students of local history The result has been that he has now placed the whole collection, hereafter known as the Hanley Court Collection,¹ together with the calendar which has been prepared on his behalf, on permanent loan at Birmingham Reference Library, where there is now a large and always increasing collection of documentary evidences mainly associated with Warwickshire and the adjacent counties

In Birmingham Reference Library there is also a Shakespeare Memorial Library which probably represents the largest collection of Shakespearean literature in the world Concerning it, Mr—now Sir—John Ballinger, at that time Librarian of the National Library of Wales, wrote as follows in the year 1906,

¹ Reference H C C , cf *Trans Worcs Arch Soc* vol v, p 70

when discussing the subject of *Shakespeare and the Municipal Libraries* ¹

"This great collection of world-wide fame is national rather than local, yet the fact remains that it owes its completeness to municipal effort and support. True, the idea of a Shakespearean library for the great industrial capital of Shakespeare's native county did not originate with the Municipal Council. Mr Sam Timmins and Mr George Dawson, both residents of Birmingham, were the originators. But it was the encouragement given to the projectors by the Birmingham Libraries Committee which enabled the idea to be realised."

This Shakespeare Memorial Library then consisted of about 1200 volumes. On 31 March, 1929, it contained 19,821 volumes,² and since then many important accessions have brought the total up to some 21,000 volumes. This Library is maintained by the Birmingham Public Libraries Committee, the only assistance received being occasional gifts and the subscriptions of a body of subscribers which at one time was considerable, but has now dwindled to a dozen members.

If these documents, and the subsequent researches to which they led, have assisted so much in the compilation of this book, certainly the source of the whole matter has been the finding of the signature of Henry Condell.

It would have been impossible to follow up this find, however, had it not been for the financial support received from Mr Walter Barrow, F S A, of Lawn House, Edgbaston, Birmingham, and for his renewed help when the researches entered upon a much larger field.

¹ *The Library*, New Series, vol VII, pp 181-91

² Cf *Sixty-seventh Annual Report of City of Birmingham Public Libraries Committee*

This resulting publication is due to the interest of Sir Offley Wakeman, and to the financial support again received from Mr Barrow, and now also from the Birmingham Public Libraries Committee, Mr George Cadbury, F S A (Birmingham), Alderman W A Cadbury (Birmingham), Sir B M Eyres-Monsell, M P and Lady Eyres-Monsell (Dumbleton Hall), and Mr John Sumner (Birmingham)

The Hanley Court Collection in its present state was originally made through the medium of Cecilia Oldys, by her marriage with Walter Savage of Broadway, who died before 21 Sep 1721¹—and afterwards with John Newport of Hanley Court. She was born in 1694, her father being the Rev Thomas Oldys, of Tingewick, near Buckingham, who for many years possessed the rectory of Quinton,² co Gloucester, lying off the main road between Broadway and Stratford-upon-Avon. As Cecilia Newport, she is still commemorated in the old church of St Eadburgha at Broadway, where there is a contemporary brass upon the east wall of the chancel, whereon her death is recorded as having taken place on 21 March, 1766, when she was aged 72. John Newport had died in 1760, aged 60.

The above-named Thomas Oldys was related to William Oldys³ (1696–1761), the antiquary, of whom the curiously interesting statement is made that he “had engaged to furnish a bookseller in the Strand, whose name was Walker, with ten years of the life of Shakespeare unknown to the biographers and commentators, but he died and made no sign of the projected work”

¹ H C C 380, cf p 118

² H C C 378

³ B M Add MSS 4240/14. Also cf p 99

Isaac D'Israeli¹ later on made searching but unavailing enquiries concerning this statement. It is said, however, that Isaac Reed (1742-1807) used the notes in the life of Shakespeare which he added as appendixes to Nicholas Rowe's *Life*, which had originally appeared in conjunction with the edition of Shakespeare's plays, first published by Rowe in 1709.

If such be the case, there is nothing more to be said, for certainly there is no evidence in Reed's appendixes that he ever saw any documents which may formerly have been known to William Oldys, through his possible knowledge of the collection which had been made by means of the two marriages of Cecilia Oldys.

Otherwise, bearing in mind the fact that this present book has been written—by a native of the Broadway area—primarily with the intention of suggesting that Shakespeare spent some of the early years of his married life therein—and not in the Dursley area—no search would be too wearying in an attempt to find these missing papers. He had married Anne Hathaway in December 1582, and in May 1583 their first daughter, Susanna, was born. Two years later the poet's life becomes obscure, and little is known of him again until late in the year 1596.

In *The Edens of Honeybourne*—a pamphlet published in Jan 1929—I have tried to show the possibilities which are presented, in a small way, by a collection of some four hundred letters written by members of the family of a Gloucestershire farmer between the years 1785 and 1839. This collection, which has since also been presented to Birmingham Reference Library, was on the very verge of destruction when its then owner chanced to read a letter which I had written to *The Times* on 4 Jan 1927.

¹ *Curiosities of Literature* (ed 1823), vol III, p 476

This letter deplored the indiscriminate destruction of old documents which is still proceeding apace in this country, a serious condition which it is hoped in some measure to allay through the appeals which have been made during the last few years by various Societies, as also from various quarters, notably through such valuable mediums as *The Times* and the British Broadcasting Corporation—and by means of the scheme promoted by the British Record Society, to which full reference was made in *The Times* on 26 June, 1929

The Hanley Court Collection, which until recent years must also have been in recurring danger of destruction, has now offered far more important possibilities than those of the Eden letters

The range of Shakespearean literature is so wide, and the sources of possible information at the Public Record Office, and elsewhere, are so many, that it has been necessary to proceed warily throughout the period of the five years during which these researches have been more or less in progress. At times there has been a desire to conjecture or to elaborate, but I hope that as a general rule this desire has been overcome, and that the facts herein are set forth without adornment

These researches are now brought to a close, at least temporarily. I leave them with a vision of other sources still unexplored, but which I trust may here have been suggested to some other willing follower of the lure and lore of Shakespeare. Such research is in a sense a fine adventure, full of the joy of life

Grateful acknowledgements are made to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, to the British Museum, and to the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, for their permission

in the matter of several of the accompanying illustrations, to the Rev Prebendary H A Mason (Vicar of St Mary Aldermanbury, E C) for his kindness in granting such ready access to his parish registers, etc , on several occasions, and also, for a variety of reasons, to the Rt Hon the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, K T , F S A , Mr Pierson C Carter (author of the *History of St Mary Aldermanbury, E C*), Mr H M Cashmore (City Librarian) and his staff at Birmingham Reference Library, Mr T Duckworth (Public Library, Worcester), Mr John Humphreys, M A , F S A (Chairman, Dugdale Society), Mr H S Kingsford, M A (Assistant Secretary, Society of Antiquaries), Rev E E Lea, M A (Rector of Eastham, near Tenbury), Mr Rees Price, F S A (Broadway), Mr S B Russell (Broadway), Sir Philip Stott, Bart , F S A (Stanton), Mr F C Wellstood, M A , F S A (Secretary and Librarian to the Trustees and Guardians of Shakespeare's Birthplace), and Rev. J Willis, M A (Hon Sec , Worcestershire Archaeological Society)

During the course of these researches it has also been necessary to communicate with many incumbents, librarians, correspondents and others, to all of whom I beg to offer sincere thanks for their interest and assistance

The accompanying map has been specially made under the personal direction of Sir Emery Walker, F S A

E A B B

CHAPTER I

HENRY CONDELL

TWO of the most interesting documents in the Hanley Court Collection are directly connected with the actor Henry Condell, an intimate friend of Shakespeare and co-editor of the First Folio of his *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*. The documents, which are both in the handwriting of Humphrey Dyson,¹ concern Condell's purchase, in the year 1617, of the moiety of a small estate known as Brockhampton, in Snowhill, in the parish of Stanton, co Gloucester—adjoining the parish of Broadway, co Worcester—and one of them is executed by Condell himself, this being the only known instance of his signature—or indeed of his writing—with the exception of the signature to his will, of which the original is preserved at Somerset House.

The first of these Hanley Court documents is an indenture² dated 23 May, 1617—thirteen months after Shakespeare's death—made between John Savage, of Broadway, co Worcester, esquire, on the one part, and Henry Condell, of London, gentleman, and William Washbourne, of Wichenford, co Worcester, gentleman, on the other part. It witnesses that Anne Daston, of Broadway, widow, the grandmother of John Savage, owns one capital messuage with the appurtenances, and three hundred acres of meadow, pasture, and arable land in Brockhampton, co Gloucester, with reversion of one moiety to the said John Savage and his heirs. The indenture then further witnesses that John Savage, for and in consideration of the sum of £800 of good and

¹ V Chapter VI

² H C C 129

lawful money of England well and truly paid to him by Henry Condell and William Washbourne, conveys to them all his moiety of the said property, provided always that the said John Savage, his heirs, executors, etc., do well and truly pay or cause to be paid unto the said Henry Condell and William Washbourne, their executors or assigns, at or in the now dwelling-house of the said Henry Condell, situate in the parish of St Mary in Aldermanbury in London, the sum of £440 each on 1 June, 1618. This indenture is signed by John Savage, in the presence of Humphrey Dyson, notary public, and William Dowman, who endorse it, and below is "23 May 15 R R James [1617] Condall Broadway"

This John Savage was the eldest son of Anthony Savage, deceased, who was one of the sons of Anne (*née* Sheldon), wife of Francis Savage, of Elmley Castle, and afterwards of Anthony Daston of Dumbleton, and of Wormington, near Broadway. Anthony Daston died on 19 July, 1572, and is still commemorated in Broadway Old Church by a small brass on the east wall of the chancel, whereon his armour-clad effigy appears. A few feet away, in the chancel, is the grave of his widow, of whom Habington notes that "she is said to have been the most bountiful gentlewoman for hospitality of her degree in England"

With reference to the terms of this deed there follow the articles,¹ dated 12 Nov 1618, agreed upon between Walter Savage and his cousin the aforesaid John Savage, of Broadway, from which it appears that John Savage is in debt and that he is raising money on his reversionary interest in the Savage property at Broadway and at Brockhampton. He enters into certain conditions, and after he has signed the agreement eight witnesses

attest their presence, "William Washbourne" being one of them

The second document¹ (Frontispiece) of direct Condell² interest is in Latin, and is dated 18 Aug 1619. Herein Henry Condell is now simply described as being of the City of London, gentleman, and he and William Washbourne, now more fully described as being one of the sons of John Washbourne, convey all the said Brockhampton property to Edward Sheldon, of Beoley, co Worcester, esquire, and Samuel Burton, Archdeacon of Gloucester, after reference has been made to an indenture quadripartite made between (1) Walter Savage, of Broadway, esquire, (2) John Croker, of Batesore [Batsford], co Gloucester, esquire, (3) John Savage, of Broadway, esquire, and Philippa, his wife, Thomas Fettiplace, of Fernham, co Berks, esquire, and Anne, his wife, the said Henry Condell and William Washbourne, and (4) the aforesaid Edward Sheldon and Samuel Burton

This is the document which is signed by Henry Condell and William Washbourne. Unfortunately there are only the faintest vestiges remaining of the seal of red wax which was affixed to the tag across a portion of which Condell wrote his signature, but Washbourne's red-wax seal bears a perfect impression of the pelican in her piety.

Condell would appear to sign himself "Henry Cundell". His signature, which is written in different ink to that of "William Washborne" at the foot of the document, is now fading.

¹ H C C 131

² The various forms of spelling this name are used so often in the course of all the documentary evidences, that it has proved necessary herein to stabilize it to this form. For the same reason a number of other instances of place-names and family-names appear in the form in which they are generally spelt at the present time.

The document must have been executed at Brockhampton or more probably at Broadway, for of the seven witnesses who endorse it (Plate II), five—Anthony Daston, William Sheldon (of Broadway), Gyles Savage,¹ Anthony Langston and William Whyte—were all men of more or less importance locally. Of the other two remaining witnesses, John Hales, esquire, was well known at Coventry, and Richard Cresheld, a barrister, was shortly to become Recorder of Evesham—six miles from Broadway—and a Member of Parliament for that borough, which he represented for many years.

Langston's presence as a witness to the signing of the deed of 18 Aug 1619, is particularly interesting, for he had been elected Town Clerk of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1617, and in that capacity signs the Corporation Minutes Book there. He was one of the Langstons of Sedgeberrow,² co Worcester, a few miles from Broadway. He served as a Member of Parliament for the borough of Evesham from March to June, 1614, and again in 1620–1625, and February to June, 1626. Charles I appears to have stayed at his house in Bridge-street, Evesham, early in July, 1644.³ Langston's active career culminated at Worcester, where he was taken prisoner on its surrender, 19 July, 1646.

It is possible that Condell had come to Stratford-upon-Avon, in that August, 1619—some three years after Shakespeare's death—in order to deal with matters concerning his friend's

¹ He died in 1631. His recumbent effigy, together with those of his father and of his wife Catherine (*née* Daston), is to be seen on their alabaster tomb in the church at Elmley Castle, co Worcester. Catherine Savage holds the figure of a posthumous daughter—their *dilecta filiola*—and four other children kneel at their parents' feet. Cf. Rev Hugh Bennett, *Elmley Castle and the Family of Savage*, Evesham Journal, 2–16 Oct 1909.

² E. A. B. Barnard, *The Langstons of Sedgeberrow*, Evesham Journal, 9 Sep 1922.

³ G. May, *History of Evesham* (2nd ed.), p. 345.

monument which must soon afterwards have been erected in the church there, but more probably with his mind occupied with the very early stages of the preparation of the contemplated Folio, which ultimately made its appearance in 1623. In the summer of the preceding year, the King's Players—according to the evidence of the Borough Chamberlains' Accounts—had been to Stratford-upon-Avon, but it is improbable that Condell came with them then.

There is an endorsement to the conveyance to the effect that Ciprian Maunsell¹ to whom, with William Stephens, power of attorney had been granted under the aforesaid indenture to give possession, etc., had later done so to Archdeacon Burton, the "parcel of ground called Loxley" actually, for the moment, representing the whole estate. On this occasion there were four witnesses to the transaction, viz Edward Fisher,² Anthony Savage, with George Couper and Thomas Chaundler, who make their marks. Beneath this, in another hand, is "Condall Brockenton 18 August 17 R R James [1619]"

It is not possible to account for the presence of John Hales at Broadway. If he came there from Coventry he may have joined Condell and Anthony Langston *en route* at Stratford-upon-Avon. Condell's name comes no more into these matters, but Hales was at Broadway again on 22 Sep following, when property there in which John Savage was also interested was conveyed³ to John Croker and Hales, who was then described

¹ Probably he was connected with John Maunsell, of Thorpe Malsor (co Northampton), near Cransley (*v* p 11). Cf Rev Canon J Davenport, *The Washbourne Family*, p 150, etc.

² Possibly a relative of William Washbourne through his marriage with Mary Fisher (*cf* p 11).

³ H C C 132 Damaged

as being "of the Newehowse¹ in the Countye of the trye, esq" This conveyance was signed by John Croker, John Savage and John Hales, the witnesses again being men of importance, in the persons of William Sheldon (of Broadway), Thomas Fettiplace, William Washbourne and John Abyngton

William Washbourne was also a witness at Broadway on 16 Nov 1619, when much Broadway property was conveyed² to Sir Thomas Coventry After that transaction his name makes no further appearance in this collection

In that same year, as Professor C W Wallace has found and described in his articles concerning Shakespeare's money interest in the Globe Theatre,³ a certain John Wytter, son-in-law of Augustine Phillips, one of the actors, brought an action in the Court of Requests against John Heminge and Henry Condell, in the matter of the profits of the Globe during the long-continued popularity of the company In the course of the documents relevant to this action, it transpires that William Shakespeare, Augustine Phillips, John Heminge and William Kemp, at one stage in the history of the Globe, had granted a certain specified moiety of the property to William Levison and Thomas Savage, who had at once regranted and reassigned it to them, in such a manner as to create in that portion of the estate

¹ "New House, Keresley [near Coventry], was a spacious stone mansion built by John Hales esq about 1584, but sold by one of his family in 1624"—T W Whitley, *Parliamentary Representation of the City of Coventry*, pp 122-3 Sir Thomas Lucy (1585-1640), of Charlecote—grandson of Shakespeare's alleged prosecutor for deer-stealing—made his will on 20 Sep 1639 (Mrs Stopes, *Shakespeare's Warwickshire Contemporaries*, pp 61-3) Amongst his many bequests is one of a diamond ring worth £50, "to my worthy cosen, Mr John Hales" Later in the will Sir Thomas also nominates "my worthy kinsman and friend, Mr John Hales, of the Priory, in Coventry" to be one of his three executors

² H C C 133

³ *Century Magazine*, August, 1910, etc

a joint tenancy, of which the full significance appears in Professor Wallace's articles

In the course of the depositions concerning this action, Henry Condell is described as being one of Heminge's "fellows and familiar companions", and both of them are reputed to be "of greate lyveinge wealth and power"

It appeared possible that the aforementioned William Levison and Thomas Savage might prove to be members of the Worcestershire families of Levison and Savage, but further research has proved that such is not the case. However, it would seem certain that William Levison is identical with the William Leveson, citizen and mercer of London, a copy of whose will, dated 8 Jan 1620, is at Somerset House.¹ Therein the testator leaves, "conscientiously" to the parson and churchwardens of the parish of Aldermanbury, where I was sometime an inhabitant,² for and towards the augmentation of the stock belonging unto the said parish sometimes in my hand, wherein I might be mistaken, the sum of £4." He also gives, amongst other bequests, twenty shillings "to the poor of the parish of St Alphage wherein I dwell", ten shillings to Susan [*not* Susanna] Hall, and £4 to Robert Hall, "for soliciting my business", and a cloak worth four nobles. William Levison had been a churchwarden of St Mary Aldermanbury in 1597 and 1598.³

The Thomas Savage who was also nominally concerned in the Globe transaction was probably Thomas Savage, citizen and skinner of London, who, on 5 Feb 1619, bequeathed⁴ his body

¹ P C C 55 Dale

² On 31 Jan 1594, one Mary Levison was buried in the church there

³ Pierson C Carter, *History of the Church and Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury*, p 58

⁴ P C C 16 Soame, cf also p 76

to be buried "in the parish church of St Stephen in Walbroke", not far removed, of course, from Aldermanbury. He possessed property in Coleman-street. In the Somerset House Calendars he is described as being of "St George, Southwark", but that parish is not mentioned in his will. In 1569 an earlier Thomas Savage had paid a fee for the burial of his wife "in the cloister" of St Mary Aldermanbury.¹

Some few years after the associations of Condell and William Washbourne with Brockhampton, and both of them being now dead, there is a further reference to the Brockhampton estate in an exemplification of recovery,² dated 13 June, 1627, where it is described as consisting of a messuage and garden, together with the three hundred surrounding acres, which are apportioned thus: eighty acres of arable land, sixty acres of meadow, eighty acres of pasture and eighty acres of woods. By that time the estate had passed into the possession of Sir Thomas Coventry, of Croome d'Abitot, who became Lord Keeper of the Great Seal in 1625, and died in 1640. It remained in that family for many years, and is now owned by Mr C. T. Scott, of the neighbouring village of Buckland. Mr Scott's earliest existing deed relative to the estate is dated 19 and 20 Jan. 1690. It contains no reference to the transactions of 1617.

The late Mr Richard Savage—formerly Secretary and Librarian of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust—who was so indefatigable and correct in all his research work, in the year 1917 noted to Mr Rees Price, of Broadway, a collection of deeds lent to him by Mr—now Sir—A. D. Flower, of Stratford-upon-Avon, relating to the property that then constituted the Middle Hill estate, Broadway. Middle Hill, adjacent to Brockhampton,

¹ Carter, *op cit* p. 102

² H.C.C. 187

was sold by the late Mrs Flower to the late Sir George Hingley, Bart, in that year, and was of course for many years closely identified with the name of Sir Thomas Phillipps (1792-1872), and his great collection of books and manuscripts, as also with the private printing-press which he established there. Mr Savage however made no printed reference to a contemporary fine which he discovered in the above-mentioned series. This fine refers to the Brockhampton transaction, and of course mentions Henry Condell and William Washbourne, but supplies no additional information.

In an indenture dated 19 May, 1628, also in Sir A. D. Flower's collection, there are additional particulars concerning the Brockhampton estate, thus: "And also all those several parcels of land and meadows, pasture and wood in Brockhampton *alias* Brockington and Snowhill, co Gloucester, called Brockhampton Woods, the Hopyards, the Hither Pastures, the Loxleyes, the Briar Close with the house thereon built or adjoining, together with the woods upon the said premises."

Thus, by means of this Brockhampton transaction, Henry Condell was brought into association not only with a small estate in the Cotswolds—some fifteen miles from Stratford-upon-Avon—but also with a member of the Washbourne family, one of the most influential Worcestershire families¹ at that period. Thus far it has proved impossible definitely to account for this association of Henry Condell and William Washbourne. The old documentary evidences of the Washbourne family have now passed by inheritance into the possession of Mr R. E. Money-Kyrle, of Whetham House, Calne, co Wilts. These

¹ Davenport, *op cit*, Barnard, *Some Notes on the Evesham Branch of the Washbourne Family*, and *The True Story of John Washbourne of Wichenford* (1620-1652).

I have been allowed to examine, but they throw no light on the matter ¹

William Washbourne's grandfather was John Washbourne of Wichenford, some seven miles north-west from Worcester. This John Washbourne, who was born in 1548, and was buried at Wichenford in March, 1633/4, became head of the family in 1570. He married twice, his first wife being Mary Savage, daughter of Francis Savage of Elmley Castle, a few miles from Broadway. By this marriage, John Washbourne had five sons and five daughters, and through his wife the Washbourne family for many years had certain interests in property in Broadway and the immediate neighbourhood. His second wife was Eleanor, daughter of Richard Lygon, of Madresfield, who bore him two sons and one daughter. Both his wives pre-deceased him, and in 1632—two years before his death—he, at the age of eighty-four, erected the large monument still to be seen on the north side of the chancel of Wichenford church, where there are recumbent figures of his father and of himself, whilst above, kneeling in niches, are his two wives.

The epitaph above this monument² still justly proclaims that within his time old John Washbourne had been sixty years a Justice of the Peace, twice High Sheriff of Worcestershire, and Deputy Lieutenant to four Lords Presidents and Lords Lieutenants of the Principality and Marches of Wales, viz the Lord Ewre, the Lord Gerrard, William, Earl of Northampton, and John, Earl of Bridgewater. It appears from various evidences in the Worcester Quarter Sessions Rolls³ that he was particularly

¹ For report on Whetham MSS. v. *Historical Manuscripts Commission Report on Various Collections*, vol. iv.

² Davenport, *op cit* illustration facing p. 89.

³ J. W. Willis Bund.

active in performing magisterial work during the years 1605–1633, about which period he was described as being “the best continual housekeeper and the best beloved gentleman of this shire”

The first son born to John Washbourne by his marriage with Mary Savage was also named John. He graduated B A from St Mary Hall, Oxford, in 1593, and was also a barrister. In 1598 he married Alice Robinson, who was the youngest daughter of Henry Robinson, citizen and brewer of London. She brought property into the Washbourne family, which included the manor of Knight's Washbourne, a few miles from Broadway, and some four hundred acres in the manor of Cransley, co Northampton. The elder son of this marriage was our William Washbourne, who was born in or about 1600. He matriculated at Brasenose College, Oxford, in 1617 and also entered Lincoln's Inn. He married when he was quite young, the ceremony actually taking place in Astley church, near Stourport. His bride was Lettice, a daughter of Sir Edward Littleton, of Frankley, co Worcester, and of Pillaton Hall, near Stafford, by his wife, Mary, *née* Fisher, of Frankley. As the Combes of Frankley and Astley and subsequently of Stratford-upon-Avon were connected with the Fishers, this may account for the reason why the wedding took place at Astley. Indeed it may have been through them, or more likely on account of his connections with the Savages of Elmley Castle and Broadway, that William Washbourne first met Henry Condell. The earliest Broadway register shows that a family of Combes was also living there c 1550—but apparently their stay was very brief.

William and Lettice Washbourne had three children. He himself, however, did not long survive the Brockhampton trans-

action, for he died in April, 1628, during the lifetime of his revered and aged grandfather, and was buried amongst his ancestors at Wichenford, where there is no memorial to him, nor has it proved possible yet to discover any further particulars concerning his brief career

I have tried at many sources, without success, to obtain some information concerning the origin of Henry Condell, but such slight clues as there are seem to lead to Essex, or to Cambridgeshire—and therein possibly to Gamlingay. In both these counties the name of Condell was not uncommon in the seventeenth century, and further north in East Anglia it was even better known.¹

It does not seem probable that Henry Condell went either to Oxford or to Cambridge, but in his will he bequeaths an annuity, under certain conditions, to his son Henry, "for his maintenance either at the university [*sic*] or elsewhere." However, there is no evidence that his wish materialized, and young Henry Condell died in 1629—two years after his father—at the age of nineteen.

Collier,² writing of Elizabeth, Henry Condell's wife, says "Perhaps she was from Norfolk" in his will Condell speaks of a cousin named Gilder, of "New Buckenham, in the county of Norfolk", and Gilder may have been his wife's relation, and cousin to Condell by marriage.

The first-known reference to Henry Condell's intimate association with the affairs of the City church and parish of St Mary-the-Virgin, Aldermanbury—adjacent to Cheapside—is to be found upon the assessment roll for the year 1600, when

¹ There is a village called Cundall, near Richmond, co. York.

² J. Payne Collier, *Memoirs of the Principal Actors in the Plays of Shakespeare*, p. 134 n.

he was living very near to his friend John Heminge,¹ who also dwelt in that parish Professor Wallace² has proved that a few years later, in the year 1604, Shakespeare was lodging in Silver-street, off Wood-street, a short distance from Aldermanbury Thus the three friends were, at that moment at least, close neighbours, and within easy distance of the Thames and the means of crossing to the Surrey side, for Southwark and the Globe Theatre Twenty years later, in 1624, Condell's name appears as the owner of two houses in Aldermanbury³

Whilst Condell lived in Aldermanbury his wife bore him nine children,⁴ all of whom were baptized in the old church which was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren after the Great Fire, in September, 1666—at which time it became a total ruin

The Condells' eldest child, Elizabeth, was baptized in 1598 and died in the following year, the youngest child, Edward, was baptized in 1614, and died during the same year Evidently they wished to perpetuate the name Elizabeth in the family, for the register shows that a daughter born in 1603 and buried in that same year was thus named, and also a third, born in 1606, who afterwards became Elizabeth Finch by marriage When this Elizabeth was born, the entry was made thus

Baptised, 26 Oct 1606, Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry Condell, Sydemman of the parish

Anne, another daughter, born in 1601, died in 1610: and Mary, the fifth and last daughter, was baptized at St Mary Alderman-

¹ The family-name Heminge, in various forms, has never been uncommon in Warwickshire and Worcestershire The earliest Broadway register shows that for some years c 1500 the name thus spelt was well represented in that village

² *Century Magazine*, March, 1910, etc

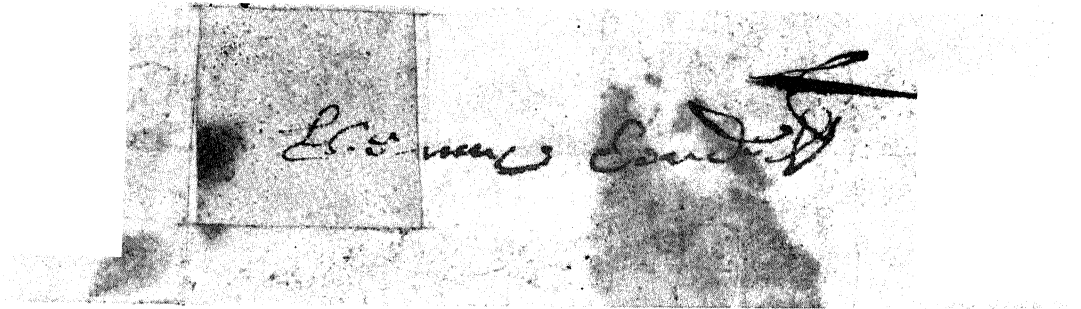
³ Carter, *op cit* p 88, etc

⁴ *Ibid* p 90

bury church in 1606, and was buried at St Leonard's church,¹ Shoreditch, having died on 18 March, 1606/7, according to the entry in the register there, at Hoxton, where Mistress Condell probably had friends with whom she was staying at the time.

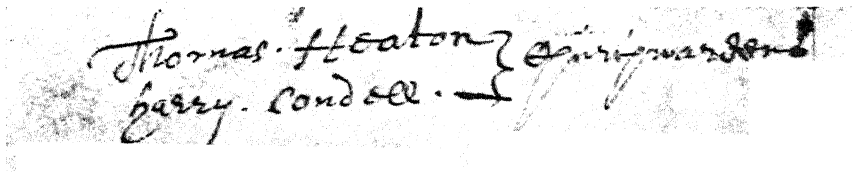
In his memoir of Condell's career, Collier thinks that the reference to his being a "Sydeman of the parish" "is remarkable, because it gives us information upon another point with which we should otherwise have been unacquainted", and later on he says "It does not appear from the register, or elsewhere, that Condell subsequently filled any other office among his fellow-parishioners" Collier, however, could not have seen the "Parish Minutes Book, No. 3, 1610-1763", from which I have been able to make additions to Mr Carter's list of Condell's parochial activities. In this Minutes Book his name appears for the first time as an office-holder on 12 April, 1612, when he was chosen to be one of the Overseers of the Poor. In 1615 he was appointed a member of the Wardmote Inquest, to which he was reappointed in 1616. In 1617 he was appointed as one of the two churchwardens, and a signature "Harry Condell" appears three times in the register under that year. This signature has always been claimed to be in Condell's handwriting, but a comparison of it with the signature to the Brockhampton deed, made in the same year, clearly makes this impossible. Moreover, an examination of the three instances demonstrates that they are in

¹ This church—"The Old Players' Church"—now possesses a marble tablet, erected there in 1914 by the Committee of the London Shakespeare League "in acknowledgment of work done for English drama by the Players, Musicians, and other men of the Theatre who are buried within the precincts of this church", particularly to the memory of James Burbage (d. 1597), Cuthbert Burbage (d. 1599), Richard Burbage (d. 1619), William Somers (d. 1560), Richard Tarlton (d. 1588), Gabriel Spencer (d. 1598), William Sly (d. 1608) and Richard Cowley (d. 1619).

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "H. CondeLL" and is written on a piece of paper that is slightly aged and has some staining. The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the center of the frame.

H.C.C. 131.

SIGNATURE OF HENRY CONDELL, 1619 (*Cf. Frontispiece*)

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script. The signature reads "Thomas Heaton" and "Harry CondeLL" and is written on a piece of paper that is slightly aged and has some staining. The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned in the center of the frame.

St Mary Aldermanbury Register

"HARRY CONDELL", 1617

the same handwriting as that of the signature of Condell's co-churchwarden Thomas Heaton, and that whoever wrote them also wrote the word "Churchwardens" after bracketing the two names together (Plate II)

For many reasons—and particularly because all the documentary evidences in the care of the Vicar and Churchwardens of St Mary Aldermanbury have been and are so piously and admirably preserved—one would like to think that these St Mary Aldermanbury signatures were written by Condell himself, and not by one of his familiars, but if any further evidence against their authenticity be necessary, it is to be found by a comparison of the Brockhampton signature with that of the signature at the foot of each of the "nine sheets of paper" of which Condell's original will—commencing "I, Henry Cundall"—consists. There the testator writes "Henry Cundall" somewhat haltingly, for it was some ten years after the execution of the Brockhampton deed, and Condell was now "sick in body" and, as it proved, within a few days of his death. At this time he spells his surname undoubtedly as "Cundall"—as against the possible Brockhampton "Cundell"—but otherwise every detail of this signature agrees with that of the Brockhampton signature. The will, which throughout is in the handwriting of the admirable Humphrey Dyson,¹ has a small seal of red wax, deeply impressed with a fleur-de-lis, on a silk tag still pendent to its last sheet.

In 1618 the Minutes Book shows that Condell was appointed Constable, and in 1619 "John Hemynges² and Henry Condall

¹ Shakespeare, it will be recalled, employed Francis Collins—a Warwick solicitor who had formerly practised at Stratford-upon-Avon—to write his will.

² He had already served as a trustee in 1608, in which year he was also churchwarden.

were appointed feoffees for our parish land", the feoffees or trustees then generally consisting of six to twenty parishioners. His friends probably knew him as Harry Condell, and Steevens—the commentator on Shakespeare—suggests that "Harry"—the Christian name given alone as that of one of the performers in Tarleton's 'The Second Part of The Seven Deadly Sins'—signified this Harry Condell.¹ If there were any proof for this suggestion it would give an earlier date by ten years to our knowledge of Condell's career. However Steevens, in company with others of his time and since then, was merely conjecturing. So we must revert to the year 1598 as being the first year in which we have any definite information concerning Condell, at which time he was appearing in Ben Jonson's 'Every Man in his Humour'. Thus the period between that year and the year 1627—in which, on 29 Dec., his body was borne back for burial, along the old, familiar ways to Aldermanbury—comprises the whole extent of his known career. For various reasons, into which it is not necessary to go, it would seem safe to assume that Mr Condell—thus he is dignified in the register—was about sixty-five years old at the time of his death, and that his wife was then some eight or ten years younger. As he tells us himself,² he had inherited property, and certainly he must have died a richer man than Shakespeare.

We have the evidence of the Brockhampton deed of 23 May, 1617, that Henry Condell was then actually living in the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury, and it seems reasonable to suggest, with no evidence to the contrary, that he remained there—with

¹ Collier (*op cit* p 133) conjectures that he was "a performer upon whose talents as a comedian much reliance could be placed"

² Cf p 22

John Heminge close at hand, and their publishers, Isaac Jaggard and Edward Blount, quite near at the Barbican in Aldersgate—until after the First Folio was an accomplished fact, late in 1623

In 1625 there is evidence that Condell was now “at his country-house at Fulham”, and it has been suggested that he went there with his wife and children in order to escape the plague which, in that year particularly, caused very considerable mortality in the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury, as the register shows. Thomas Dekker, the dramatist and pamphleteer, at this time wrote his *A Rod for Run-awayes*, in which he attacked all those who had thus left London. This pamphlet appears to have wounded the feelings of certain players who had had, perforce, to go into the provinces temporarily to earn their living. They replied with *The Run-awayes Answer*, which is dedicated “To our much-respected and very worthy friend, Mr H. Condell, at his country-house at Fulham”. This pamphlet, as Collier says, shows the good terms upon which Condell lived with his associates. It seems that before the players left for the provinces—where, they say, their friends are hard to be found—Condell bestowed upon them “a free and noble farewell”, and so they, now at Oxford, turn to him, as being “nearer to London by many miles”, to be the arbitrator between them and their friends, “in so brave a point of honour”.

Although Condell by his will had said “My body I commit to the earth to be decently buried in the night-time”—a somewhat fashionable custom at that period—“in such parish where it shall please God to call me”, it has been already shown that he was buried at St Mary Aldermanbury where, as his will evidences, he still possessed his houses

Heminge, in his will, although living outside the parish,¹ requested—some three years afterwards, on 9 Oct 1630—that his body should “be buried in Christian manner in the parish church of St Mary Aldermanbury, London in the evening”, which was done three days afterwards and the burial duly registered there. So, happily, the dust of this great pair mingles in the sacred precincts of the church, set in the midst of the little parish which they had served so well for many years. There, too, is the modern memorial erected to their honour.²

When Shakespeare died in April, 1616, his will revealed the fact that he had remembered his three old London friends—“my fellows”—John Heminge, Richard Burbage, and Henry Condell, but apparently no one else—except possibly Thomas Russell—amid those familiar surroundings of the strenuous old days. Heminge and Condell, when the time came that they should make their own wills—certainly after a rather long interval of years—in 1630 and in 1627 respectively, appear to have made no bequest to anyone at Stratford-upon-Avon, and Burbage’s will—in 1618—was nuncupative.

In the patent granted by Charles I to his Players in 1625, the names of John Heminge and Henry Condell come first and second in the list. It is known that Condell continued his interest in the theatre until the last, for in the course of his will,³ dated 13 Dec 1627, wherein he describes himself as “Henry Cundall, of London, gentleman”, he says “I give and bequeath unto my said son William Cundall, all the clear yearly rents and profits,

¹ He is described in the contemporary parish accounts as being a stranger (Carter, *op cit* p 88)

² Cf p 95

³ P C C 18 Barrington Collier (*op cit* pp 145–9) gives it in full

which shall arise and come from the time of my decease, of and by my leases and term of years, of all my messuages, houses and places, situate in the Blackfriars, London, and at the Bankside, in the county of Surrey, until such time as that the full sum of three hundred pounds by those rents and profits may be raised for a stock for my said son William, if he shall so long live", and he makes his wife, Elizabeth, his residuary legatee and sole executrix She, in person, proved the will on 24 Feb 1627/8.

There has also been the suggestion that when the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury purchased that parsonage and advowson in 1621, the signature of Henry Condell—as one of the representative parishioners—was affixed to the relevant deeds. That this is not the case, however, is proved by an examination of the deeds in question, which, with many more concerning the parish, are now preserved and readily accessible at the Guildhall Library, within a stone's throw of the church of St Mary Aldermanbury

The first deed¹ concerning the purchase is dated 15 June, 1621 It is an indenture made between Roger Rante, senior, of Swaffham Prior, co Cambridge, esquire, and Roger Rante, junior, his son and heir apparent, and thirty-one parishioners² who are named, amongst them being "Henry Cundall" This deed is endorsed with the signatures of "Jo Greene", "Ro Eccleston", "John Couchman", and "John Barnard".

Later on, in 1630, the above-named Robert Eccleston is described in the churchwardens' accounts as being "the King's Receiver for the City of London for the fee-farm rent of the Parsonage due to his Majesty" It is possible that he was a

¹ Parish of St Mary Aldermanbury, No 79

² Cf Carter, *op cit* p 9, where the full list of names is given

relative of William Eccleston, who was one of the "Principall Actors" of Shakespeare's plays, and therefore a colleague of Heminge and Condell Collier¹ suggests that this William Ecclestone sprang from a Southwark family

In the other two deeds²—also concerning the purchase of the parsonage and advowson—dated 3 July and 15 Nov 1621, "Henry Cundall" is again similarly mentioned

There is yet another deed³ in which Condell is named This deed, which has not hitherto been recorded elsewhere, is dated 1 April, 1626, and therein, amongst the "now or late parishioners", his name appears together with that of John Heminge

In addition to his friendship with Shakespeare and with Heminge, Condell was evidently always *persona grata* with the King's Players generally In 1605 Augustine Phillips⁴ bequeathed "to my fellowe, William Shakespeare, a thirty shilling peece in gould" and "to my fellowe Henry Condell one other thirty shilling peece in gould", Alexander Cooke,⁵ in 1614, entreated Condell's assistance in "bringing up of my poor orphans", in 1616 Shakespeare⁶ left him 26s 8d with which to buy a ring, in 1623 Nicholas Tooley⁷ bequeathed £5 to Mistress Condell, "the wife of my good friend, Mr Henry Condell, as a remembrance of my love", also £10 to their daughter, Elizabeth, and again "my loving friend, Henry Condell" was appointed a residuary legatee and executor, and in 1624 John Underwood⁸ appointed his "loving friend Henry Cundell" to be one of his executors, and it fell to his lot to prove Underwood's will, and

1 *Op cit* p 245

2 Parish of St Mary Aldermanbury, Nos 80 and 81

3 No 82

4 P C C 31 Hayes

5 P C C 48 Lawe

6 P C C 59 Cope

7 P C C 53 Byrde

8 P C C 15 Clarke

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to safeguard those "two seal rings, one with a death's head,¹ the other with a red stone in it" which were eventually to come to the testator's young daughter Elizabeth, and which Condell in his will says that he himself had kept "by themselves apart in a little casket"

I have found that, a few months before his death, Henry Condell was the defendant in proceedings in Chancery² brought against him by one Matthew Baldron, of the parish "of St Maries Strand alias Savoy", conveyancer, and Elizabeth, his wife, who was the executrix of the will of Thomas Massam, of the same parish, conveyancer, her late husband deceased

The complainants—they shall tell their tale practically in their own way—say that the aforementioned Thomas and Elizabeth Massam for many years held, by the demise of Henry Condell, of London, gentleman, a messuage in the Strand,³ in the parish of the Savoy, at a yearly rent of £20. As time went on they say that Henry Condell determined to rebuild this house, together with his other houses there, which eventually he did. Massam had paid his rent regularly, and had spent money from time to time on the old house, which was very ruinous. He promised Condell not to take any other house, but to wait until the new one was finished. Condell, on his part, agreed to grant him a lease of the new house for £40 less than he would require from anyone else.

Massam therefore refused many prominent houses which

¹ Cf "Biron. A Death's face in a ring" 'Love's Labour's Lost', v, 2, 616. Anthony Sheldon, of Broadway, co. Worcester, gentleman, by his will dated 2 Aug. 1585, left to each of his brothers and sisters a ring, with "a deathe heade", worth 30s.—F. C. Wellstood, *Catalogue of the Books, Manuscripts and Relics exhibited in Shakespeare's Birthplace* (ed. 1925), p. 93.

² P. R. O. C. 2. Chas. I, B. 96/42.

³ Cf p. 24.

would have been very convenient for his trade, and placing entire reliance on Condell he actually "was constrained to build a shed or shop in the midst of the street", in order to preserve his custom. In this shed or shop he lived for six months, to his great loss and detriment of custom. Finally the new buildings were completed, and what did Condell do but lease them all to a man named Francis Meverell, for a long term of years. So Massam was handed over to the tender mercies of Meverell, who made him pay £93 as a fine, and £30 *per annum* as rent, for his new house, besides which Massam had to spend at least £40 "in finishing and fitting the same for dwelling". This was more than anybody else had to pay for any other of the buildings, and he had to pay the money, otherwise he would have been disappointed of a dwelling.

The unfortunate Massam, growing much discontented, declared his grievance to Condell, and told him that this business would tend to his utter undoing, if Condell did not relieve him therein. Condell persuaded him to proceed with the new lease, often promising him £5 towards his recompense, and also that he would himself pay the next quarter's rent of £7 10s, adding assurances thereto of many other favours that he would make to Massam. However, he has never kept his promises, and Massam has died. So the complainants now ask that a writ may be issued against Condell, to make him answer in these matters.

A few days later—on 2 May, 1627—Henry Condell answers accordingly, and commences by stating the very interesting fact that he became possessed "by inheritance"—unfortunately he does not say from whom—of the said property which, as will appear elsewhere, was a distinctly valuable one. He adds that, at the time when it came to him, it was then known "by the name

of the Helmet”¹ He had held this property from about the year 1607, at least, for he adds that “about twenty years ago” he demised it to a man named Radcliff, who occupied it for divers years, and afterwards to one Glynn, who divided it into several tenements, whereof one he demised to Massam

It is not necessary to go further into this answer, as it contains no additional points of interest Suffice it to say that Condell proceeds to detail at some length what actually were his transactions with Massam, and certainly he seems to have used him quite fairly therein The rest is silence—for there do not appear to be any other documents in existence in connection with these proceedings and a few months afterwards Henry Condell was dead

There is no evidence whatever that Condell at any time in his life followed any other occupation than that of an actor He died, as his will testifies, possessed of considerable property, besides his shares in the two playhouses, the Blackfriars, and the Globe on the Bankside, Southwark, occupied by the King’s Players That he was a man of integrity and of substance is additionally evidenced by the archives of St Mary Aldermanbury, and by this Brockhampton transaction

¹ Cf p 32 In a description of the City of London, c 1605, there is mention of the “Helmet Inn”—Harl 6850, f 31

CHAPTER II

ELIZABETH CONDELL

THE discovery of the Brockhampton documents and the results of the further research to which they were leading, inspired me to hope that some new facts might also come to light concerning Henry Condell's wife and their three surviving children. Mistress Elizabeth Condell indeed made a special appeal, for she of course must have been very well known to Shakespeare, and to the wide circle of Condell's other friends and fellow-actors.

When Condell, on 13 Dec 1627, dictated his will to Humphrey Dyson, he made the following bequests to his wife " I give, devise, and bequeath all and singular my freehold messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever lying and being in Helmet court in the Strand, and elsewhere, in the county of Middlesex, unto Elizabeth, my well beloved wife, for and during the term of her natural life and all and singular my freehold messuages in the parish of St Bride, alias Bridget, near Fleet Street, London, and elsewhere in the city of London, and the suburbs thereof, unto my well beloved wife, Elizabeth Cundall " She was also appointed to be full and sole executrix, and Henry Condell earnestly desired his "very loving friends, John Heminge, gentleman, Cuthbert Burbage, gentleman, my son-in-law, Herbert Finch, and Peter Saunderson, grocer, to be my overseers, and to be aiding and assisting with my said executrix in the due execution and performance of this my last will and testament"

We have already seen that Henry Condell made suitable

arrangements for his two sons William and Henry, and that—"forasmuch as I have by this my will dealt very bountifully¹ with my well beloved wife"—Elizabeth Condell would have only a residuary interest in the theatres "in the Blackfriars, London and at the Bankside in the county of Surrey" There is also the bequest to her and to "my said well-beloved daughter Elizabeth Finch" between them of all household stuff "at my house in Fulham as also in my house in Aldermanbury".

So Elizabeth Condell was left in very comfortable circumstances, still to live at their riverside house at Fulham, to which her husband's retirement had been destined to be so comparatively brief, and there especially to ruminate over his appearances at Whitehall, not so far distant—and at those other palaces and places—in

*Those flights upon the banks of Thames
That so did take Eliza and our James*

Then there were the two boys to occupy her mind at a difficult time in their lives Henry, for whom his father had had "the university" in mind, was seventeen, and died some two years later, William, now sixteen, was in "his term of apprenticeship", concerning which there will be more to say later on The only daughter, Elizabeth, had married Herbert Finch Eight years passed, and then in the autumn of 1635² Mistress Condell died and—on 30 Oct—was buried at St Mary Aldermanbury, near to her husband and their very mutual friends John Heminge, and Rebecca, his wife—a great fellowship, the four in death not divided

¹ Shakespeare, as we know, simply—although perhaps not significantly—bequeathed "unto my wife my second best bed, with the furniture", an interesting contrast

² Register of St Mary Aldermanbury

Such was the story of Elizabeth Condell. Indeed, Sir Sidney Lee, in his biography¹ of Henry Condell, published in 1908, dismissed her with an even briefer notice. He says "Nothing is known of his [Condell's] wife except that her name was Elizabeth, and that she was buried at St Mary Aldermanbury, on 30 Oct 1635", and there is no reference to her in the last edition—published in 1925—of his *Life of William Shakespeare*.

To find any further details concerning Elizabeth Condell would therefore be worth much additional research. And so it has proved. The calendars at Somerset House have, in the first place, revealed her stern will,² made on 1 Sep 1635, and proved by her true friend—thus she styles him—Thomas Seaman, on 18 Feb 1635/6. Therein she describes herself as "Elizabeth Cundall, of Fulham, widow", and she revokes all former wills. Her soul she bequeaths to Almighty God, and her body to be buried as shall seem fit to her executors, "Mr Cuthbert Burbidge and Thomas Seaman", who as we already know chose St Mary Aldermanbury. They are to satisfy all her debts and legacies, to have £10 apiece for their pains, and "to have a care unto my grandchildren, the children of my daughter Finch, and to perform my will in such manner as I shall appoint, for certain causes which I have made known unto them touching my own son, William Cundall, as also my son-in-law, Mr Herbert Finch—the which I hold fit herein not to mention", being cautiously added.

The trouble with Herbert Finch must have begun after Henry Condell's death, for at that time—as already noted—Finch acted as one of the overseers of his will. Altogether the relations between Mistress Condell, and her now only surviving son and

¹ *Dictionary of National Biography*

² P C C 13 Pile

her son-in-law, were very strained William had turned out badly, and Elizabeth's husband—Herbert Finch—was no better. Even her daughter Elizabeth—Mistress Herbert Finch—has displeased her, but she will not be unmindful of her, so she is to have—"if", Mistress Condell adds parenthetically, "the goods shall not then be worn out"—"the use of all my linen and wearing apparel except that which is hereafter mentioned". So death perhaps did not seem to be so near to her as it really was.

To Elizabeth Finch there follows another bequest of things evidently very dear to Mistress Condell, and presenting latent possibilities to us who ponder over them. She indeed is to have "one striking clock, two gold hatbands and one gold whistle", with reversion to her children—and to nobody else, for the testatrix adds "I do intend that my said son-in-law, Mr Herbert Finch, shall never have the same. Therefore I will that my executors shall keep those goods for my grandchildren unless"—and now she unbends a little—"he my said son-in-law shall keep house and shall then give good security to my executors that my grandchildren shall have those goods after their mother's death,¹ in case they be not worn out before then".

The testatrix then turns her thoughts to "all my messuages that I possess, of which one is at Fulham and in which I now live and the others in London". These she leaves to her grandchildren unless the executors decide that a competency shall be afforded out of them for Elizabeth Finch, their mother, in which case the grandchildren are in no wise to trouble the executors,

¹ The will (P C C 135 Twisse) of a certain Elizabeth Finch, of the parish of St Leonard, Shoreditch, was proved by Ralph Petley, gent., on 11 Sep 1646. This Shoreditch association makes it seem possible that the testatrix was Henry Condell's daughter, but the will contains no evidence on this point.

but shall allow of it as being done for their mother. It is interesting now to have this evidence that the house at Fulham belonged to the Condells, for Collier¹ thought that possibly Henry Condell "rented a cottage at Fulham, to which at intervals he retired", and concluded that the "country-house at Fulham"² was not Condell's actual property.

William Condell—he was now twenty-six—is to have twenty shillings one week after his mother's death, "but if the executors in their discretion and judgment shall think fit to give him any more, then such sum shall be paid out of the interest, lease or term of years which I have in the Globe and Friars [Blackfriars]

and my reason is that I would have no part of my estate neither prodigally spent nor lewdly wasted by him."

Young William Condell, under his father's will, was assured of a certain income, so his mother's will might conceivably cut him off with this twenty shillings. The residue of her estate "in the Globe and Friars" she leaves to her grandchildren. "But", she adds, with her mother's heart, "if my executors find and see that my said son, William Cundall, shall not amend his courses, but spend that estate and means which he now has, then my will is that he shall only have the said twenty shillings, unless his extreme poverty and need shall cause my said executors to afford him what in charity they shall think fit." Further to complicate matters he was married, the Christian name of his wife being Elizabeth. To her the executrix leaves a silver porringer. There was a little girl too, also named Elizabeth—of whom, as will appear later on, young Mistress Condell was not the mother—and to her a sum of £50 is eventually to come.

The bequests to William Condell and his wife are, in any case,

¹ *Op cit* p 141

² *Cf* p 17

not to become effective—as they have no interest at all in the property—until they have levied a fine of “all those twelve messuages situate in the Strand, co Middlesex, which I have sold to John Hatt, gentleman for more than £1000”, and to which further reference is made before the will ends

To Mistress Burbage, Cuthbert’s wife—she died shortly afterwards—is left one silver fork and a gold purse, to Mr Seaman “a case of strongwaters with all that doth belong unto it, together with a gold purse, and because the said Thomas Seaman has done the office of a true friend unto me, therefore and in performance of my promise I give him all my books” Doubtless they had all come to her from Henry Condell How greatly one would like to know what books they were, and if Condell’s copy of the First Folio chanced to be amongst them Perhaps some other day these secrets may be revealed—and indeed how many more?—when the contents of those sacks full of old probate inventories, still lying unindexed at Somerset House, are classified and made accessible to the searcher Soon may it be

Returning to Elizabeth Condell, she now bethinks her of other friends, the first to come to mind being the bearer of an interesting name, one John Diodate—thus in the will—probably an uncle or an elder brother of Charles Diodati (1608[?]–1638), the friend of John Milton who addressed two Latin elegies and an Italian sonnet to him, and lamented his death in *Epitaphium Damonis* This Charles Diodati was the son of Theodore Diodati (1574[?]–1651), who came from a Lucca family, and whose chief literary merit was that he assisted Florio in his translation of Montaigne John Milton was born in Bread-street, quite close to the Condells—who must have met and known so many interesting people—in Aldermanbury, in 1608, and in 1656—long

after their régime had become a distant memory—he was married to Katherine Woodcock, his second wife, in the familiar church of St Mary Aldermanbury, as the register there still testifies. In 1630 he had written his great epitaph on Shakespeare, which graced the introductory pages of the Second Folio of 1632.

Elizabeth Condell leaves to this John Diodati—whom she evidently knew well, for she eventually appoints him to be one of the overseers of her will—a satin cap and a seal ring, possibly being mementoes of her husband. All things considered one would like to know much more concerning Diodati, but research at various possible sources of information has, thus far, proved ineffective.

The next bequest is of “one gilt cup” to Isabella Underwood, who was the younger daughter of John Underwood, the actor, with whose will—as already shown—Henry Condell had been concerned as an executor in 1624.

To a certain Mistress Norton there is a bequest of “two smocks, my cotton coat, a green apron, and a [spinning] wheel”, together with the remission of £20 which she owes to the testatrix. To Mary Norfon a sum of twenty shillings is left.

A bequest of particular interest now follows, being one made to Elizabeth Wheaton, widow, who is to have “the gathering Place at the Globe during my Lease”, and also one featherbed and blankets, two pairs of coarse sheets, two smocks, two aprons, a silver cup and £20, whilst to her daughter—whose Christian name the testatrix evidently could not recall—is left a pair of coarse sheets and £10.

Old Elizabeth Wheaton¹ must in her time have been a very

¹ Cf pp 33-4

well-known figure, both at the Globe and at the Blackfriars. Evidently she had always well and truly served the Condells, for Henry Condell had also remembered her in his will. He, some eight years previously, had given and bequeathed "unto my old servant, Elizabeth Wheaton, a mourning gown, and forty shillings in money, and that place or privilege which she now exerciseth and enjoyeth in the houses of the Blackfriars, London, and the Globe on the Bankside, for and during all the term of her natural life, if my estate shall so long continue in the premises, and I give unto the daughter of the said Elizabeth Wheaton the sum of five pounds, to be paid unto the said Elizabeth Wheaton, for the use of her said daughter, within the space of one year next after my decease."

I have not been able definitely to trace the will of Elizabeth Wheaton, but it is possible that she was the Elizabeth Wheaton, widow, of the parish of St Michael Bassishaw—adjacent to St Mary Aldermanbury—whose will was proved on 18 Nov 1645.

The next beneficiaries under Elizabeth Condell's will are Jasper Smart, £20, Joan Smart, forty shillings, "the mother of Jasper Smart", forty shillings, the poor of Fulham, forty shillings, and the remission "to one Jones" of a debt of forty shillings.

The overseers of the will are to be Mr Lowen and Mr John Diodati, who are both to have a piece of plate and fifty shillings. This Mr Lowen was the popular John Lowen¹ who was famous for his impersonation of Falstaff. He held a distinguished place in the company of the Players, and was a shareholder in the Globe Theatre. Consequently he had had many Shakespearean

¹ "John Lowin" with "Henry Condell" and "Dick Burbage" also are some of the most eminent of Shakespeare's fellows, who appear in their own characters in the curious Induction to the edition of Marston's 'Malcontent' which appeared in 1605.

associations with Henry Condell, with whom he acted for some years.¹ Unlike some of his friends he is said to have died a poor man. It does not appear that he made any will.

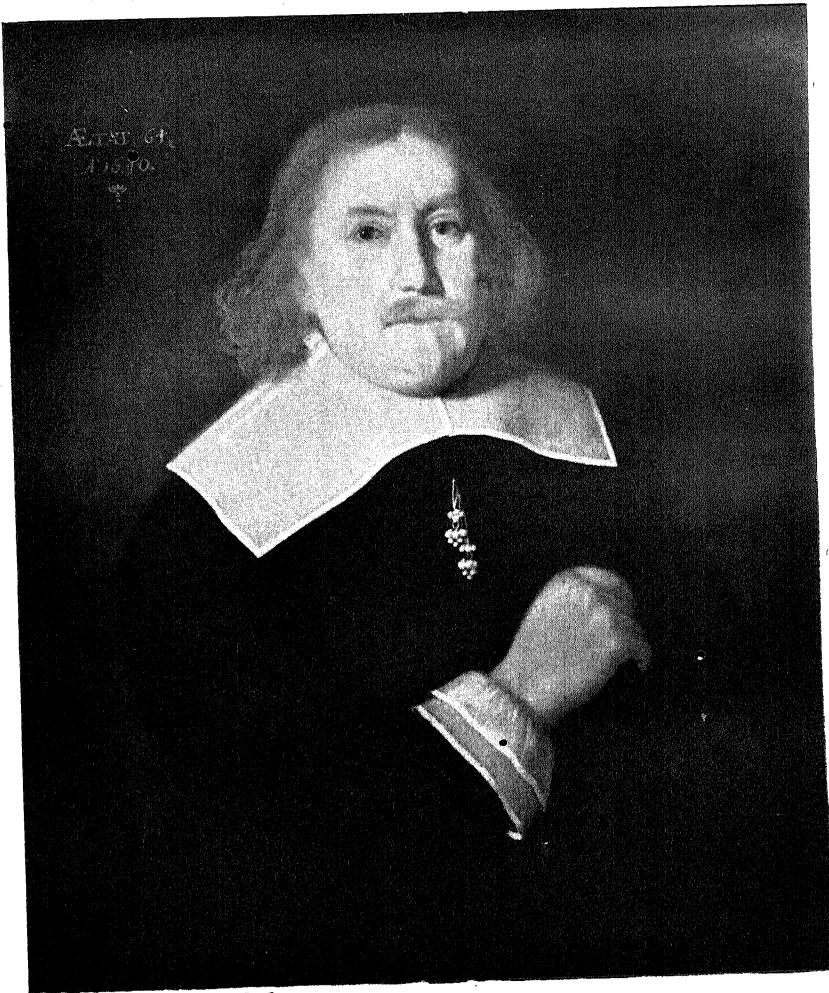
Finally there comes a very important addition to the will of Elizabeth Condell. She has already referred to her property "in the Strand", which she had inherited from Henry Condell, and which is more definitely described in his will as being in "the Helmet Court", which stood opposite Somerset House, and which took its name from the old Helmet Inn, all now vanished. This particular property which, it appears, consisted of twelve messuages, had been sold for the then very considerable sum of £1450—thus the amount is now definitely stated—by Mistress Condell to John Hatt, gentleman, and "he has already paid me most part of the same." But there has been some trouble in connection with the transaction, for the testatrix adds that "because of the unjust dealing of one Sir William Acton, knight and baronet, with me, for relief of which I have now a Bill² depending in the Chancery against him, therefore to the end that all people may know that it is my will and meaning that he the said Hatt should enjoy his bargain made with me. I do will devise and grant the said messuages to the said Hatt, he or his assigns paying the residue of money owing, either to me or to my executors.

"I appoint William Danyll³ and Walter Acton, trustees for the said Sir William Acton, to seal and deliver and acknowledge in Chancery that deed and grant of bargain which I have already

¹ Cf. Collier, *op cit* pp 165-79

² Not now traceable at the Public Record Office

³ Possibly a relative of Samuel Daniel (1562-1619), the poet who composed numerous masques for Court festivities, whose sonnets must have been well known to Shakespeare, and who was at one time associated with the productions presented by the children of the Queen's Revels



Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

JOHN LOWEN IN 1648

sealed unto Hatt, and acknowledged before Mr Page, one of the Masters in Chancery ”

Thus ends the will, of which the original document had been signed by Elizabeth Condell, the witnesses being Robert Blumson, Thomas Blumson and Mary Cole, who made her mark

The outlook for Cuthbert Burbage and Thomas Seaman as executors was not propitious, indeed it eventually transpires that Burbage declined to act

As Elizabeth Condell in her eight years' widowhood had had to deal with at least two very unsatisfactory people, in the persons of her son, William, and her son-in-law, Herbert Finch, it seemed quite likely that after her death her trustees may have been troubled with some litigation as the result of her will. Such has proved to be the case. Of the two Chancery Proceedings which I have found one is that of Thomas Seaman, executor of the will of Elizabeth Condell, late of Fulham, widow, against William Stephens, and Anne, his wife, Edward Norton, and Judith, his wife, and the aforementioned Elizabeth Wheaton, widow, and Elizabeth Wheaton her daughter, and a widow named Bennynge, whose Christian name does not transpire

The complaint in this suit¹ is dated 4 May, 1636—seven months after Elizabeth Condell's death—and, as already noted, Thomas Seaman appears alone as executor, although Elizabeth Condell had also appointed Cuthbert Burbage to act with him. We shall see later on the reason alleged for Seaman's solitary connection with these matters

In his complaint Seaman throws further interesting light on the Condells' possessions in their home at Fulham, thereby

¹ P R O C 2 Chas I, S 70/51

helping us somewhat to visualise that "free and noble farewell" which Henry Condell seems to have given there in 1625, to the little necessitous company of players who for a time were leaving the plague-stricken area of London

Seaman says that Elizabeth Condell, in September, 1635, at Fulham possessed certain plate, viz two silver tankards, a salt, twelve silver porringers, four silver flagons, ten beer bowls of silver, and sixteen wine bowls, altogether valued at £120 and upwards, together with "divers other pieces of plate gilded and of other goods of the value of £300 and upwards" Unfortunately, too, she had children in whom she could repose no trust—so presumably her daughter, Elizabeth, was also troublesome, for she is not excepted. Such being the case, Mistress Condell about the time mentioned, either privately or otherwise, delivered over to the aforesaid defendants not only all this plate and other goods and chattels, but also some ready money besides the £100 hereafter mentioned, "to keep for her until she or her executors should call for the same" The £100 she brought or caused to be brought to the house of old Elizabeth Wheaton, widow, who must know what became of it, but she refuses to divulge anything concerning it or any of the other goods

It is evident that Elizabeth Condell must have become old and eccentric. Seaman says that after she had made her will, he as her executor in her lifetime asked the defendants for the return of the money and goods, but they refused to give up anything. After her death Seaman again approached the defendants with a similar result. He now alleges conspiracy between them and "one Herbert and Elizabeth Finch, his wife"—their relationship to Elizabeth Condell is not mentioned—from whom the widow Bennynge "had goods in custody", upon which Mistress

Condell apparently had lent money to Herbert Finch. She had also lent money to all the defendants, of which Seaman says that he can obtain no particulars, nor can he recover a gown and other apparel which she had sent to a certain Nicholas Chester, and Elizabeth, his wife, "to dress up and do somewhat to the same", with other goods worth £100.

To these allegations, the only answer now existing is that of William and Anne Stephens. The latter says that she was of great and long acquaintance with Mistress Condell, who often had promised to do something for her and her children. Last September, she continues, one of her daughters was to be married, so Mistress Condell gave her (Anne Stephens) two silver tankards and one silver salt, so that she could pledge them for £20, and she need not trouble to redeem them herself, for Mistress Condell would see to that when Michaelmas should come. Eventually the plate was pledged, through the medium of Katherine Howe, a good friend, for the required sum. Mistress Condell also had lent her £5 about a year ago, saying that she "would take the same up of her in meat, her husband being a butcher." Since then Mistress Condell had been supplied with meat and other trifling things, amounting to 24s 2d, which is still unpaid.

Anne Stephens adds that about three months before this last transaction, she heard Elizabeth Condell say that she had lent to Goodwife Penn of Putney, "a silver candlestick, a gold ring and one piece of gold that was her daughter's by her father's [Henry Condell's] gift, which she would not have her lose." Again those haunting thoughts of Shakespeare!

In conclusion, Anne Stephens suggests a counter-claim, for she says that she lent Mistress Condell, some three years ago,

a tapestry-covering for which she often promised to pay her, and which was worth forty shillings As for any of the other goods mentioned, she and her husband deny all knowledge of them No subsequent depositions have come to light concerning this suit, or indeed, concerning any other of the suits which have been found during these researches

CHAPTER III

WILLIAM CONDELL AND HERBERT FINCH

THE second Chancery Proceeding¹ is of an earlier date—May, 1633. It is more directly concerned with William Condell than with his mother. They are the complainants, being therein described as Elizabeth Condell, widow, executrix of Henry Condell, late of Fulham, co. Middlesex, gentleman, deceased, and William Condell, son of the said Henry and Elizabeth Condell.

They are proceeding against Edward Pate and William Bagnall,² citizens of London, and in the preamble of their bill they say that Henry Condell, having divers children, desired to bring them up so that they might be profitable to their country. So with this end in view he apprenticed the aforesaid William, "his then younger son", to one Edward Pate, haberdasher, trusting to his honesty and care. He did this for William's benefit and advancement, and in order that he might be brought up in the trade of a hosier, for his future means and livelihood.

This fact, although of small importance, explodes Collier's suggestion that young Condell was apprenticed probably to a grocer of the name of Peter Saunderson, one of the four overseers of Condell's will.³ Later on, indeed, Collier refers to the youth definitely as "William, the grocer".⁴

¹ P R O C 2 Chas I, C 47/58

² Their respective parishes are not given. It seems likely, however, that Pate lived in the parish of St Michael Bassishaw, where there are contemporary instances of the name, and certainly the Bagnall family were associated with the neighbouring parish of St Mary Aldermanbury about that period, and for many succeeding years.

³ *Op cit* p 144

⁴ *Op cit* p 150

The indenture of apprenticeship for eight years was dated 9 June, 1625, and young William Condell was shortly afterwards duly enrolled before the City Chamberlain according to custom Henry Condell paid £20 it seems, and Pate undertook to teach young William—who was then fourteen years old—the trade of a hosier, finding him meat, drink, apparel, and other necessaries Since then, they say, Henry Condell has died, having appointed his wife as his executrix, in which capacity she has duly acted Also Henry Condell, the only elder brother of William Condell, has died in the meantime

William Condell—we are still following the trend of this Chancery complaint—thinking that by his father's and brother's deaths he would come into some estate, laboured and endeavoured to get himself at liberty His master, perceiving this, and intending to make great benefit for himself thereby—"yet well knowing that your said oratrix Elizabeth would no ways yield or consent thereto"—influenced young Condell, after he became of age, to throw up his apprenticeship, unknown to his mother and her friends Condell was to pay Pate £47 for breaking his bonds eighteen months before they should have expired, and also to enter into a bond of £80 for that payment This was continued in the name of William Bagnall, gentleman, as though Condell owed the money to him Pate then "let loose" the young apprentice, "to do what he listed and to be ruined, without any conscience of the duty of a master", and promised him that he should be a freeman of London

The rake's progress was now accelerated In the crowded little London of those times—in which his father was formerly so well known to many people—he too began to play his part in its very variegated life It was a very unworthy

part, however, and young Condell quickly and irretrievably degenerated into a haunter of taverns where, Pate says later in the documents, he would spend as much as forty shillings at a time

Pate—so young Condell prompts his mother to say—thinking that he (Condell) might tell people how much he had paid to be free, urged him to reply that he had trusted a man named Patrick Welsh, and others, “for commodities and that they had become bad and desperate”, or else that they had paid him and he had converted the money to his own uses

In conclusion the complainants say that William Condell, by Pate’s unconscionable dealing, is utterly ruined and undone, and that if Pate had only fulfilled his undertaking the young man would have been saved from the wicked company with which he now associates himself They have exhibited their complaint to the Lord Mayor and the Aldermen, his brethren, on 11 February last, and Pate is going to sue Condell for the £47 So they ask that he may be cited to appear before the Court of Chancery, and that an injunction be issued to stay the proceedings at the Common Court

Pate and Bagnall file their joint answers a few days later—28 May, 1633—Pate at once saying that, after the death of Henry Condell and his young son Henry, William Condell began to importune him for his freedom, but Pate was unwilling to let him go, because he was his only apprentice However, the youth was not to be thwarted, and soon he began to talk of his mother being “a weak woman”, and that “one Mr Finch, the Common Crier, who married his sister, and one John Underwood and his sister, went about to conceal and defraud him of his estate, which he being in service could not look after”

Pate says that at last he in some sort gave way to the importunities of William Condell who, presumably to show his gratitude, desired to give him something in lieu of the time—being some two and a half years—that he should have remained in his apprenticeship. Pate, taking into consideration the experience that young Condell had had whilst with him, and rightly regarding the last years of his apprenticeship as being the best, thought that he could with good conscience accept the security for £40 which Condell offered him. However, he told him that he would not do so until the youth had talked over matters with his mother, and for that purpose he says that he sent him to her house at Fulham. William Condell went there, and on his return said, of course, that his mother was very willing that he should do as he wished.

Again, Pate avers that William Condell was justly indebted to him for wares which he had let his friends and acquaintances have on credit, without his master's consent, to the value of £7 13s 8d or thereabouts. Pate then proceeds to give interesting details concerning these dealings, from which it appears that Mistress Elizabeth Condell owed him £2 12s 6d for stockings, a certain Mr Kniveton owed 5s for a pair of worsted stockings, a certain Sharpe, who is described as a player, but whom I have not been able to trace, owed 41s 10d for stockings, Mistress Finch's maid owed 23s for a pair of silk stockings, Mistress Finch herself—William Condell's sister—owed the more humble sum of 12s for stockings, and the redoubtable Herbert Finch, her husband, 7s for stockings. Added to these amounts there was a sum of 14s for two pairs of hose stolen from the shop through young Condell's negligence, which he had agreed to pay. The whole sum due from him for these

items therefore really amounts to £7 15s 4d, to which must be added 18s which Pate had lent to him

Thus the agreement was made to which young Condell referred, and after the bond had been signed he again "desired to go into the country"¹—to Fulham—to see his mother, and there to settle his estate, the incidence of which unfortunately seems to have had such disastrous effects upon him for the remainder of his life. Apparently he had given no trouble during his father's lifetime, for Henry Condell—whose actions prove him to have been a very shrewd man of business—makes his bequest to him without any implication. Certainly the boy was then only sixteen, and, as already shown, Condell says "I give and bequeath unto my said son, William Condell, all the clear yearly rents and profits, which shall arise and come from the time of my decease, of and by my leases and terms of years, of all my messuages, houses, and places, situate in the Blackfriars, London, and at the Bankside in the county of Surrey, until such time as that the full sum of three hundred pounds by those rents and profits may be raised for a stock for my son William, if he shall so long live"

Apparently, too, William Condell had come into a little money by the death of his brother Henry in 1629, aged nineteen

Pate concludes his answer by denying the various other statements made by William Condell, and regretting that he should have allowed himself to be influenced by this youth who, he says, "as an apprentice was addicted to vain and idle courses", of which he gives two or three bad instances—and consequently was in an unsatisfactory state of health

1 Cf Dekker's reference to Henry Condell's "country house", p. 17

I had long been hoping to find what was the occupation of Henry Condell's son-in-law, Herbert Finch, who, it always seemed possible, was connected with the well-known Aldermanbury family of that name. This possibility is now strengthened by the fact that the office of Common Crier¹ of the Corporation of the City of London—which office now comes high in the rank of the Corporation officials—was already at that time one of some importance and standing, and also that it was then combined with the office of Sergeant-at-Arms.

Young Elizabeth Condell, as we already know, was born in 1606, and she had married Herbert Finch during her father's lifetime, for he appointed him to be one of the overseers of his will. This was in December, 1627, and the marriage may have taken place not long before that time at Fulham,² where the Henry Condells were now living.

The reference to John Underwood and his sister is also of considerable interest. This John Underwood was the eldest of the three sons—John, Burbage and Thomas—of John Underwood—one of the actors of Shakespeare's plays and a shareholder in the Curtain, Globe and Blackfriars. John Underwood had died a widower in 1624, leaving his sons, and two daughters named Elizabeth and Isabella, all quite young, to the care of his "loving and kind fellows", the King's Players.³ It was probably Isabell Underwood to whom William Condell refers, for Mistress Condell had left her that gilt cup in 1635.

John Underwood, the actor, had also then appointed "his

¹ Cf. *Rembrancia*, p. 289, where there is a detailed reference to this office. Also Lt. Jewitt and Sir W. H. St. J. Hope, *Corporation Plate and Insignia*, vol. 1, p. 91, G. Norton, *Commentaries*, pp. 365-6, Alex. Pulling, *Laws and Customs*, pp. 17-18.

² The existing Fulham parish registers do not commence until 1674.

³ Collier, *op. cit.* p. 227.



*This Shadowe is renowned Shakespear's Soule of th' age
 The applause' delight' the wond'r of the Stage
 Nature her selfe, was proud of his designe
 And joy'd to weare the dressing of his lines;
 The learned will Confess, his works are such,
 As neither man, nor Muse, can prayse to much
 For ever live thy fame, the world to tell,
 Thy like, no age, shall ever parallell.*

Trinity College, Cambridge

FRONTISPIECE OF THE CAPELL COPY OF THE POEMS

loving friend" Henry Condell to be one of his executors, and John Heminge and John Lowen to be the overseers of his will

Henry Condell had eventually himself proved Underwood's will, and when he came to make his own will—some three years later—there is evidence of his very great desire conscientiously to discharge his duty to his dead friend's memory, and to his family. He says¹

"Imprimis, whereas I am the executor of the last will and testament of John Underwood, deceased, and by force of the same executorship became possessed of so much of the personal estate of the said John Underwood, which is expressed in an inventory thereof made, and by me exhibited in due form of law into the ecclesiastical court

"And whereas also in discharge of my said executorship, I have from divers times disbursed divers sums of money in the education, and bringing up of the children of the said John Underwood, deceased, as by my accompts kept in that behalf appeareth

"Now in discharge of my conscience, and in full performance of the trust reposed in me by the said John Underwood, I do charge my executrix [Elizabeth Condell] faithfully to pay to the surviving children of the said John Underwood all and whatsoever shall be found and appear by my accompts to belong unto them, and to deliver unto them all such rings as were their late father's, and which are by me kept by themselves apart in a little casket." There were twelve such rings

Thus the very close association between the Condells and the Underwoods now only helps to emphasize the contrast between

¹ Collier, *op cit* p 146

the character of Henry Condell and that of his degenerate son, William, who was now ready wantonly to malign John Underwood and his sister, with both of whom he must have been on friendly terms in their younger days together

And now what further of "Mr Finch, the Common Crier", that very troublesome son-in-law of Henry and Elizabeth Condell?

Another record of him has come to light amongst the archives in the Records Office of the City of London, in the Guildhall there. It is in the *Rembrancia*,¹ and is no less than a letter from one of the Masters of the Court of Requests, Sir Sidney Montague, written by the command of King James I, then at his hunting-lodge at Royston, co. Hertford—and addressed to the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen. In modernized terms this letter reads as follows

May it please your Lordship

Whereas humble suit hath been made to His Majesty on behalf of Mr Herbert Finch to be recommended to your lordship and the City of London for the office of Common Crier, and Sergeant at Arms of the said City next after him who is now in possession of the same place, His Majesty hath commanded me to write to your lordship and the rest of the Aldermen of the said City to let you understand that His Highness hath taken notice of him to be a person well-qualified and fit for the exercise of the place, and that His Majesty shall take your choice of the said Mr Finch to the said place in reversion, if acceptable part, and will retain the same in

¹ Vol VIII, p. 46. Traced through the medium of the printed volume *Rembrancia*, which was published in 1878.

*memory So not doubting of your Lordship's readiness and the rest,
to give His Majesty satisfaction herein, I humbly rest*

Your loving friend

MONTAGUE

From the Court at Royston, 3 Nov 1622

*To the Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of the City of London, and
Aldermen of the said City*

The mills of the gods ground slowly, and it was not until 11 Jan 1629—seven years later, and one wonders what Herbert Finch had been doing meanwhile—that the King's recommendation became effectual. This was two years after the death of old Henry Condell, through whose influence it had probably been obtained. Then Herbert Finch realized his ambition, if indeed he had any, and was admitted under such high auspices to the office of Common Crier and Sergeant-at-Arms. Thus it is recorded in the Corporation archives, and also that later on one Edmund Deeves was admitted as Finch's deputy on 17 Dec. 1634. Not long afterwards old Mistress Condell died, and then Finch was drawn deeper and deeper into the vortex.

His final record, so far as we know it, is also to be found in the City archives. From them¹ we learn that the Court of Aldermen, "in consequence of his continual absence etc, and of his inability and negligence, discharged him from his office" on 13 March, 1645—at the height of the Great Rebellion.

Returning briefly to Thomas Seaman, it is very probable that he experienced other troubles in connection with his executor-

¹ *Rembrancia*, p. 303 n.

ship of Mistress Condell's estate, but he can scarcely have expected a recrudescence of them as far on as August, 1643. However, as long as William Condell was alive he was almost certain to be troublesome, and I have found him, still unabashed, at that time making a complaint¹ to the Court of Chancery, wherein he describes himself as being of the parish of St Sepulchre's,² London, gentleman

William Condell was now thirty-two years of age. His trouble, it appears, still concerns his mother's will. He says that she was possessed of "a great personal estate valued at about £3000" and that, as we already know, she had left £50 to William Condell's daughter, Elizabeth, to be paid to her when she should attain her majority, or on the day of her marriage, whichever should first happen. She had also appointed Cuthbert Burbage and Thomas Seaman as her executors but, says William Condell, "Cuthbert Burbage refused to meddle with the estate", and therefore Thomas Seaman took possession of all Mistress Condell's personal belongings.

However, as Cuthbert Burbage died on 17 Sep. 1636, less than a year after the death of his friend Mistress Condell, it is far more likely that he—who was evidently a good-natured man—then really declined to help in the administration of her estate, either owing to his ill-health and increasing age—for he had been one of Henry Condell's "very loving friends" and an overseer of his will—or because, possibly, he felt unprepared to share in the responsibility of executing Mistress Condell's will, with the unattractive prospect of having to deal with two such men as William Condell and Herbert Finch.

¹ P R O C 2 Chas I, C 22/35

² The existing registers of St Sepulchre's do not commence until 1662

As for Thomas Seaman,¹ William Condell says that he was "a mere stranger", who had got Mistress Condell to have her will engrossed during his (William's) absence, that he had also succeeded in alienating her maternal affection from him, and that since her death, Seaman has withheld his maintenance and has endeavoured to bring him to utter ruin which, he adds, would have happened many years since if he had not been relieved by his friends

But to return to this legacy of £50 Seaman refuses to pay it to William Condell, although his poor little Elizabeth had died quite three years ago—at about eight years of age Condell says that he has taken out letters of administration, and has often demanded payment of the legacy, but Seaman declines to pay it and has brought several actions² against him, "to weary him and make him desist his prosecutions" Seaman has, however, offered him £10, although he has plenty of money in hand with which to pay the whole £50, on condition that Condell will grant him a general release

It is not necessary to follow these brief proceedings any further, except to add that Seaman exposes the fact that the little Elizabeth was William Condell's illegitimate child, that her mother was one Joyce Ashton, who is now lawfully married to a man named Edmund Noble, and that she it is to whom the legacy will be paid when it becomes due, that is to say in another ten years, by which time the little girl would have attained her majority

¹ He may have belonged to the Norfolk family of Seaman

² Apparently there are no existing evidences of them

CHAPTER IV

BROCKHAMPTON AND THE BROADWAY AREA

(Map facing p 124)

BROADWAY is situated in the centre of a shaft of Worcestershire which pierces its way through the Gloucestershire littoral of the Cotswolds, right up and over Middle Hill and Spring Hill. The Brockhampton estate begins a little distance south of the old Broadway church of St Eadburgha,¹ set amidst its great elms, not far from the now vanished Manor House of the Savages, where several grassy mounds and shallow pools remain as its only memorial.

Amongst these Hanley Court documents there has come to light the original inventory,² measuring altogether some seven feet in length, of the goods and chattels and debts of Mary Savage, who had lived at the Manor House, and who was buried at the old church on 12 Feb 1658/9. The inventory is dated 23 February following. By its means it is possible somewhat to visualize the old house and its interior, where it is probable that Henry Condell signed the Brockhampton document in 1619, and where Mary Savage certainly entertained King Charles I on Sunday, 16 June, 1644, for one night. Incidentally it is of interest to note the important series of documents³ in this collection concerning Worcestershire and the Great Rebellion.

On the opposite side of the road, close to the church, is the

¹ Rees Price and C E Bateman, *The Church of St Eadburgha in Broadway*, Transactions of Birmingham Arch Soc vol XLIV, pp 126-38, with illustrations

² H C C 151, cf Barnard, *The Old Manor House, Broadway*, Evesham Journal, 25 May-8 June, 1929, where a full transcript of the inventory appears

³ H C C 561-87, cf Barnard, Transactions Worcs Arch Soc vol v, pp 70-91, with illustrations



•
SNOWSHILL AND BROCKHAMPTON

"Court House"—which consists of the old gatehouse to Broadway Court, with modern additions—where, above a square label over the archway facing the road, are the quartered arms of Sheldon, Sheldon quartering Ruding and Willington, and below the label are the crests of Savage, Sheldon and Daston. A shield of Daston quartering Dumbleton is built into the modern west front.

The Brockhampton estate begins at a little distance south of the church. The road passing beneath Brockhampton, which is on its right, crosses a little stream—being the boundary between Worcestershire and Gloucestershire—and proceeds in a steep gradient to the delightful little Cotswold hill village of Snowhill, some eight hundred and fifty feet above sea-level, from whence there is a fine and inspiring view towards the Stratford-upon-Avon country, a perfect English landscape.

As the ascent is made to Snowhill there are even now times and conditions when those lines in 'Richard II',¹ which Shakespeare wrote probably very early in 1593, come readily to mind. The scene, it will be recalled, is laid in "The Wilds in Glostershire"—there are many of them of course much wilder—and Henry Bolingbroke and the Earl of Northumberland are approaching Berkeley Castle. Bolingbroke enquires how much further they have to go, to whom the Earl replies

*Believe me, noble Lord,
I am a stranger here in Glostershire
These high wild hills, and rough uneven ways,
Draw out our miles and make them wearisome*

On the Brockhampton estate, about one-third of the way down the slope of the hill beneath the wood called Littleworth, there

1 Act II, Sc 3

are now two modern cottages with adjacent farm buildings. These buildings have been to some extent made out of the ruin of the early seventeenth-century Manor House¹ which stood quite near one which, after falling into great dilapidation, was demolished early in the present century. It was a stone-built house with mullioned windows, and showed evidence of having been finely proportioned. Another small stone-built farmhouse of the same period is still in occupation. It is known as Little Brockhampton, and has two contemporary fireplaces.

From 1617 to 1619 the name of Henry Condell, the actor, was, as we have seen, associated with Broadway and Brockhampton.² Some three centuries afterwards both places were again to be named in connection with a new form of the actor's art, for in 1913 the village of Broadway played its part in the making of the English film of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and the scene of the fire therein was "staged" in and amongst the ruined outbuildings of the old Manor House at Brockhampton.

There appears to have been a Shoreditch connection with Broadway concerning which, thus far, I have been unable to obtain any further information. For according to the Broadway register under the year 1636/7 "Mistress Sara Jaques, wife of Mr Jaques an Italian born in Padua,³ chirurgion, Inhabitant of Tower Hill, London was buried the first day of March. She was the daughter to Mr Cotton, minister of Shoreditch."

¹ Information from an abstract of deeds in the possession of Mr C. T. Scott, of Buckland (cf. pp. 9-10).

² There are no other known references to his name in any local documentary evidences, e.g., the parish registers of Broadway, and of Stanton and Snowhill.

³ The Library of the University of Padua—that "Fair Padua, nursery of Arts", so closely identified with the action of *The Taming of the Shrew*—possesses an imperfect copy of the First Folio, this being one of the three copies of the First Folio which are known on the continent of Europe.

There is no other contemporary reference to this family of Jaques in the Broadway register, nor is there apparently any record at St Leonard's, Shoreditch, that a Cotton ever had any ministerial associations with that church in the seventeenth century

In Birmingham Reference Library there is a lease¹ of lands, etc., at Broadway, granted by Ralph Sheldon and William Child to Robert Gybbbs and Richard Hyckes, on 20 Oct 1580

This was the Richard Hyckes who, with his son Francis—who must not be confused with Francis Hyckes *alias* Hathway, to whom reference follows—was so closely concerned with William and Ralph Sheldon's tapestry-weaving schemes.² These schemes operated at Barcheston, co. Warwick, and at Bordesley, near Beoley, co. Worcester, and they must have been known to Shakespeare, for tapestries were being woven there, more or less, almost during the whole period of his life

It should be noted that there are various early references to members of a Hathway³ family in the Broadway registers, the first being in 1544. Richard Hyckes was, from other evidences, in some way associated with them towards the close of the sixteenth century. On 15 May, 1603, a release⁴ of land at Broadway was made by Michael Yonge, of Kingham, co. Oxford, yeoman, and Elizabeth his wife, late the wife of Francis Hyckes *alias* Hathway of Broadway, yeoman, to Walter Savage, of Broadway, esquire. The land had formerly, on 21 Dec 1586,

¹ Reference 167556

² Cf E A B Barnard and A J B Wace, *The Sheldon Tapestry-Weavers and their Work*, Archaeologia, vol LXXVIII, pp 255-314

³ The Shakespeare marriage-bond, dated 28 Nov 1582, in the Worcester Probate Registry files (1582 80 h) is between "Willm Shagspere and Anne Hathwey", not Anne Hathaway, as so often appears in this connection

⁴ H C C 125

been leased by Thomas Sheldon, late of Broadway, gentleman, to William Hyckes *alias* Hathway of Broadway, yeoman, father of the said Francis Hyckes *alias* Hathway

It may be possible that "Greece"—"old John Naps of Greece", one of Christopher Sly's boon companions who is mentioned in the Induction to 'The Taming of the Shrew'—is a misreading of the place-name Greet, a hamlet near Winchcombe—a few miles along the road from Broadway to Cheltenham. Indeed Sir Sidney Lee is prepared definitely to consider that it is an obvious misreading, and he adds¹ "According to local tradition Shakespeare was acquainted with Greet, Winchcombe and all the villages in the immediate neighbourhood. He is still credited with the authorship of the local jingle which enumerates the chief hamlets and points of interest in the district" The lines are

*Dirty Gretton, dingy Greet,
Beggarly Winchcombe, Sudeley sweet,
Hartshorn and Wittington Bell,
Andoversford and Merry Frog Mill*

In 1872 the Rev J Haviland published his little *History of Fladbury*, an Avon village of which he was then Rector, and which is situated a few miles from Evesham and from Broadway. In the course of his book he says

"For many generations there was a family residing in the parish of Fladbury of the name of Perkes. My attention has been called to the fact that, in the Registers of 1609 and 1611, there are recorded the burials of two members of that family whose Christian name was Clement"²

¹ *Op cit* p 238 n

² Apparently there was also a Clement Perkes there in 1568. Cf D H Madden, *The Diary of Master William Silence*, p 381

"Readers of Shakespeare may remember that in one of his Plays ('The Second Part of Henry IV', Act v, Scene 1) he mentions a person called 'Clement Perkes of the hill' This almost leads us to think that Shakespeare had some acquaintance with Fladbury, for the play in which the name occurs was certainly written during the time when a man of that name was living there, and Stratford-upon-Avon is at no great distance There is another name in the Registers of that period, certainly not a common name—'Bottom', which also occurs in one of Shakespeare's Plays, written about the same time May we cherish the thought that the greatest of our poets may have derived some of his inspiration from the scenery of the Vale of Evesham, while gazing on its smiling plains, and its winding river—his own river Avon—from the 'Hill' on which stood then, as now, a hamlet of Fladbury?"

The hamlet in question is called Hill and Moor, the former section lying at some little distance off and above the main road from Evesham to Worcester, whilst Moor lies low on the other side of the road, nearer to Fladbury

The actual reference in the 'Second Part of King Henry IV' comes in the course of the conversation in the hall of Justice Shallow's house in Gloucestershire Shallow asks Davy upon what business he has come

Davy *I beseech you, sir, to countenance William Visor of Wincot against Clement Perkes of the hill*

Shallow *There are many complaints, Davy, against that Visor that Visor is an arrant knave on my knowledge*

Shakespeare, as we know, makes use of this place-name Wincot on more than one occasion, and several places in

Warwickshire and Gloucestershire may lay claim to be the scene of Sly's drunken exploits

However, we will grant that Wincot may be an unfortunate misprint and a confusing variant of Woncote, and that this Woncote is synonymous, in the vernacular, with Woodmancote, for which several writers, including particularly Mr Justice D H Madden,¹ make a strong case. So doing, they place this Woodmancote—still known locally as Womcot or Woncot, and Stinchcombe Hill as “the Hill”—as being near Dursley, far away down in the south-west of Gloucestershire and some miles from Berkeley, and there they find that there were families of Perkis or Perkes, and of Visor or Vizard.²

On the other hand, if we are inclined to accept Hill, near Fladbury, as being “the hill” with which our Worcestershire Clement Perkes was associated, we can then bring into conjunction with it—for our own Womcot or Woncot—the hamlet of Woodmancote, high up on the Cotswolds, above Cheltenham—on the road between Cleeve Cloud and Bishop's Cleeve, some seventeen or eighteen miles from Fladbury. It must be admitted, however, that this Woodmancote does not appear ever to have had any family of Visor³ or Vizard living there, nor has it any Shakespearean tradition such as Dursley and its neighbourhood are claimed to possess.

The Rev R W Huntley says⁴ “The portion of Shakespeare's life which has always been involved in obscurity is the interval between his removal from Warwickshire and his arrival in London, and that period, we think, was probably spent in a

¹ *Op cit* pp 85-7, 380-2

² This family name was then also represented in several Worcestershire villages

³ An Anthony Vysser had died at Broadway, c 1556 (*Cal Worcs Wills*, p 140)

⁴ Cf *A Glossary of the Cotswold Dialect* (1868), p 23

retreat among his kindred at Dursley, in Gloucestershire. Certainly there appear to have been Shakespeares in Dursley and its district, but there does not appear to be any evidence forthcoming that they were Shakespeare's 'kindred' and we know that contemporary instances of his family name were by no means uncommon."

If, therefore, on this Woodmancote point we are prepared to admit that the Dursley claim is stronger in its coincidences, it cannot be agreed, however, that the claims of Dursley are very strong in other respects.

In the 'Second Part of King Henry IV' there are those three vivid scenes, placed respectively in the court before Justice Shallow's house, in a hall in his house, and in his garden. In the garden scene Sir John Falstaff, turning to Shallow, says "'Fore God, you have here a goodly dwelling and a rich", to which his host replies, "Barren, barren, barren, beggars all, beggars all, Sir John", but he admits that he enjoys "good air" there.

With reference to this scene, Mr Justice Madden¹, still with the Berkeley-Dursley tradition in mind—says "Good air and comparative barrenness were indeed the main characteristics of the swelling uplands, extending eastward from the justice's hall to the ancient city of Cirencester, and northward as far as the borders of Warwickshire. A region of bare hills and billowy downs, famed for a breed of white-faced sheep, and for its Whitsun games, whose fame might have perished but for their restoration by Robert Dover, and their celebration by the poets of the day"

It is not really necessary, however, to place Shallow's house some forty miles away from Dover's Hill—which lies between

Chipping Campden and Weston Subedge—a few miles from Broadway, on the Stratford-upon-Avon side—for there is indeed within a radius of a very few miles of it many “a goodly dwelling and a rich” similarly situated in the Broadway area, which then and now would equally have excited the admiration of Sir John

Therein, too, are regions of bare hills and billowy downs whereon, at early dawn in summer, those who have been privileged to enter into the high heart of Cotswold have stood and there, as the sun has risen, have placed themselves deep in the wonder of the awakening landscape—of the mystic emergence of the many near and distant hills—and have thought upon one of the most beautiful of the sonnets of Shakespeare

*Full many a glorious morning have I seen
 Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
 Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
 Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy,
 Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
 With ugly rack on his celestial face,
 And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
 Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace
 Even so my sun one early morn did shine
 With all-triumphant splendour on my brow,
 But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
 The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now
 Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth,
 Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun
 staineth*

(Sonnet xxxiii)

Or, again, upon Romeo and Juliet, when he bids her

*look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops*

Mountains, in Shakespeare's day and indeed in days later than his, needed no qualification of height to rank as such in comparison with hills. Impressiveness was the test, and thus for instance we find Thomas Baskerville writing, nearly a century afterwards, of his journey along the rough way from Bourton-on-the-Water over the Cotswolds to Winchcombe. Thus magniloquently he describes¹ the view which opened up before him as he reached the climax of his journey, some miles from Broadway

You now begin to go up and mount the highest summits of the Cotswold hills. Here at the first glimpse of casting our eyes into the bottoms under a large extent of the vale beyond it, began in us a kind of pleasant horror to see what burly mountains did start up here and there, which by the intermedium of the dusky air did make them look more strange and terrible. Before us the great Malvern hills did stretch themselves like a mighty bank, upon the right hand of these you may see the top of the famous Wrekin, 8 miles from Shrewsbury, and to the left the black mountain [the Black Mountains] under which is the golden valley not far from Hereford, with a many more mountains in Wales, Shropshire and other places unknown to me

¹ *Hist MSS Com 13th Report*, App pt II, Barnard, *From Burford to Winchcombe in 1682*, Evesham Journal, 24 July, 1926

And, again, Basse begins his panegyric to Robert Dover and his "Olimpick Games upon Cotswold Hills" thus

*You faire assemblies that renowne
These Mountaines with th' Olimpick Sport*

On Dover's Hill—before it was *Dover's* Hill—the fallow greyhound of Master Page may have been "outrun on Cotsall", and there "Will Squele a Cotswold man" may have performed his great deeds

Then, later on, at every Whitsuntide there came Master Robert Dover to renew and enlarge the sports, clad in a suit of clothes which "our blessed James" had presented to him and bravely wearing other kingly adornments. The *Annalia Dubrensis* eventually sang and remain to sing, in the laudatory poems of his friends, the *Ovations and Triumphs of Master Robert Dover*. First in this choir of praise is the great Michael Drayton himself. Amongst the other three and thirty contributors is another of Shakespeare's most intimate friends, Ben Jonson, and there also again is William Basse, that enthusiastic admirer who wrote, presumably some three or four years after Shakespeare's death in 1616, his elegy upon that inspiring theme. Basse's elegy found an impressive echo from Ben Jonson, a man who was far more capable of striking the great resounding chords, and who—with his friend's elegy in mind—wrote for Heminge and Condell's First Folio of *Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories and Tragedies*, in 1623, that profound apostrophe to "My Shakespeare"

From the eminence of the natural amphitheatre of Dover's Hill—now happily, thanks greatly to the energy of Mr F L

E H New provides a drawing of Dover's Hill as the frontispiece to *The Last Records of a Cotswold Community*, published by C R Ashbee in 1904, and a panoramic photograph was reproduced in *The Times*, 19 June, 1926

Griggs, protected by the sure shield of the National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty—we look out upon the Warwickshire distance, which comprises some of the country which we know was Shakespeare's country, around Stratford-upon-Avon. So, too, Dover's Hill itself, and Chipping Campden, and Broadway, and all the villages there around, fall naturally and lawfully into an extension—intimately known to him—of Shakespeare's country into Gloucestershire—with its "Tewkesbury mustard"—and Worcestershire.

Still looking forth from Dover's Hill, we see, in the beautiful Worcestershire distance—graced indeed by the Malvern Hills and by Bredon Hill—the town of Evesham where, on the banks of the Avon that singular incident known as "The Foole and the Ice"¹ took place, late in the sixteenth century. Later on, in 1605, it was first printed in a collection of tales entitled *Foole Vpon Foole or Six Sortes of Sottes*, which was re-edited in 1608 under the title of *The Nest of Ninnies*, by Robert Armin, one of Shakespeare's fellow-actors.

To this incident Shakespeare may be alluding in 'Troilus and Cressida'² when Ulysses tells Achilles "The fool slides o'er the ice that you should break." Its circumstances were as follows.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century the oft-recurring fairs at Evesham drew together large numbers of people from far and near, the trade in stockings being not the least of their attractions. Thus Adrian Quyny writes to Richard Quyny—probably in November, 1598—a letter³ addressed to him at the Bell Inn, in Carter Lane, London, in the course of which he says

¹ Reprinted by J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps in 1883.

² Act III, Sc. 3.

³ Cf. Wellstood, *op cit* pp. 43-4.

“ Yff yow bargaen wt W^m Sha or receve money there, or brynge y^r money home yow maye see howe knite stockynges be sold, ther ys gret bying of them at Evysshome”

To Evesham, therefore, also came numerous companies of strolling players, and one winter the town was honoured by the presence of the players of Lord Chandos of Sudeley. The story goes that their performances had been specially appreciated by one Jack Miller, a native of Evesham, the popular fool of the town and neighbourhood. Miller announced his intention of decamping with his favourite performer, the clown, at which news there was an anxiety on the part of the inhabitants to frustrate the design. They wished Miller, however, to have a last look at the actors, so he was taken to the White Hart Inn, most of which, under other conditions, is still in existence in Bridge-street there. Arrived at the inn, he was locked up in a room from a window of which he could see the players pass upon their way to their next quarters at Pershore, the Avon flowing between that road and the inn. No one dreamt that any further precautions were necessary, for although the river was slightly frozen over, it was not considered that the ice would be thick enough to bear a bootless individual, even should escape from the inn be practicable. No sooner, however, did Miller get a sight of his clown than, managing to slip to the ground from the window, he dashed down the slopes to the river and scudded over the ice to the players, executing his venturesome feat, to the utter amazement of them all, in perfect safety.

Thus the story of “The Foole and the Ice”

Another interesting association with the Broadway area may be noted. On 24 July, 1605, Shakespeare bought of Ralph Huband, who owned the manor of Ipsley, co. Warwick, a lease

of a moiety of the tithes of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Bishopton and Welcombe, for £440¹ The Broadway register evidences that this Ralph Huband had married, on 23 April, 1584, Anne Daston, daughter and heiress of Anthony and Anne Daston,² of Dumbleton and of Wormington, near Broadway, a fact which does not appear to have transpired hitherto

Furthermore, at Birmingham Probate Registry, there is the brief inventory³ of the possessions of Ralph Huband, who is described as "Right Worshipful" This inventory was made on 31 Jan 1605/6, and therein I have found what is presumably a new and direct reference to William Shakespeare

It appears that Huband owed £6 to "Mr Walter Savage"—his Broadway relative—for sheep, and £20 to "Mr William Sheldon", doubtless William Sheldon of Broadway

Then follow these items

There was Owinge by Mr Shakespre xx li

Then Owinge by the privye seale xx li

*There is Owinge for the intereste of the moytie or one
halfe of the privye tenthes of Ludington⁴ for xxx^e yeares
to come by lease wth the Arerags⁵ there of eighte yeares
paste w^{ch} is in Ser Edward Conways hands* xxx li

Administration was granted to Anne, widow of Ralph Huband

¹ Cf p 116

² Cf p 2

³ *Cal Worcs Wills*, 1606, 90 b

⁴ On the Avon, a few miles below Stratford There is a local tradition, apparently modern in origin, that Shakespeare was married at Ludington

⁵ Arrearages

CHAPTER V

SIR CHARLES PERCY

THUS, if only with these Broadway, Brockhampton, and other local associations and possibilities in mind, one feels that Sir Charles Percy, of Dumbleton, should now take a more prominent place than has been given to him in the past. There is little or no reference to him in several of the published works concerning the House of Percy, and local literature at all times appears to be entirely silent concerning him.

It must have been about the year 1600 that Sir Charles had come to live at the little Gloucestershire village of Dumbleton, some six miles south-west of Broadway, and situated in a remote and picturesque countryside, little distant from the main range of the Cotswold Hills and not many miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. He was the fourth son of Henry Percy, eighth Earl of Northumberland, and Katherine, the eldest daughter and co-heiress of John Neville, Lord Latimer, and had received his knighthood from Queen Elizabeth at the hands of Robert, Earl of Essex, in 1591. This was before Rouën, where a numerous body of Englishmen serving under the Earl had joined Biron and Henry of Navarre in besieging the city.¹

Sir Charles Percy again figured prominently in the Irish Wars, in the disastrous action at Blackwater in 1598, when the Marshal, Sir John Bagnall, was slain with 1500 of his men. On this occasion Sir Charles was colonel in command of the vanguard, and materially assisted in keeping the enemy in check after their victory, and in protecting the retreat by a masterly manoeuvre.

¹ Cf E B de Fonblanque, *Annals of the House of Percy*, vol II, p 210

In the following year Essex appointed him to lead the assault upon Cahir Castle, which he carried after gallantly repelling a sortie, described by the Lord Lieutenant as "one of the greatest skirmishes in this kingdom" ¹

Sir Charles, at the time when he received the accolade before Rouen, probably little thought that later on he would be closely associated with the Earl of Essex in a seditious undertaking against the ruling powers. So, his soldiering days being over for the time being, he came to peaceful Dumbleton without any apparent reason for doing so.

At this time Shakespeare was at the very zenith of his power, and between the years 1597 and 1600 had written, at least, the 'First Part of King Henry IV', the 'Second Part of King Henry IV', 'King Henry V', the 'First Part of King Henry VI', 'Julius Caesar', and 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'.

When Sir Charles—then presumably a bachelor—first came to Dumbleton, a certain Edmund Hutchins was lord of the manor there. Hutchins died in 1604, without issue, leaving Dumbleton to his wife, Dorothy *née* Cocks, of the Eastnor (co Hereford) family of that name ². She was married to Sir Charles some years afterwards, and they remained closely connected with Dumbleton for the remainder of their lives. There was one child of this marriage, a daughter named Anne, who died when an infant.

Sir Charles's father, Henry Percy, eighth Earl of Northumberland, to whom reference has already been made, had been destined to lead an eventful life, which began to approach its culmination in 1571, when he commenced to intrigue with Mary, Queen

¹ For these and other details see Carew MSS, also Fynes Moryson's *Itinerary*, pp 26 and 76.

² Cf Rev H L Somers-Cocks, *Eastnor and its Malvern Hills*, pp 110-11.

of Scots. He was arrested during that year, and was released in 1573, but was unable to resist new intrigues, and finally, in 1584, he was sent to the Tower of London to await trial and there, not long after his arrival, he was found shot through the heart. As to his guilt in the various conspiracies of that period there was no doubt at all, and had he come to trial he would undoubtedly have been sentenced to execution. Thus, in order to save his property for his children, he had anticipated forfeiture, and had shot himself.

Sir Charles Percy himself, despite his loyal military service, probably suffered directly or indirectly, with other members of his family, for his father's intrigues. Yet he, too, was unable altogether to avoid similar temptations, and he became to a certain extent associated with the Essex Plot of the years 1600-1601.

The story of this plot may be briefly recorded. Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex¹—who had become the Queen's favourite in 1587, in which year he was made Master of the Horse—had accepted, in 1599, the office of Lord Deputy of Ireland, then in a state of rebellion. There were great hopes that he would succeed in pacifying the country, but he utterly failed to do so, and was ordered back to London there to be tried for disobedience of the Queen's orders and for neglect of duty. Eventually—on 26 Aug. 1600—he was dismissed from all his offices of state. Bitterly disappointed, he at once commenced to organize a plot to remove from the royal Court all those whom he considered had been concerned in his downfall. The Earl of Southampton, a close friend of Essex and the patron of Shakespeare, joined him, and other young men of position also allied themselves to him—

¹ In Birmingham Reference Library there is an original warrant, dated 2 June, 1594, signed by Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of Essex to Sir John Fortescue, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Master of the Wardrobe, for liveries for certain grooms employed in the Queen's service.



British Museum

ROBERT DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX

Sir Charles Percy being one of their number—in this plot eventually to get the Queen into their own power

Sundry documentary evidences, already detailed by other writers, are in the State Papers Domestic¹ at the Public Record Office. Amongst these evidences is the examination of Sir Gelly Merrick, taken upon 17 Feb 1600/1, who says that a few days previously—it was actually on Saturday, 7 Feb, the day preceding the one fixed by Essex for his rising in the streets of London—he had dined at Gunter's, with Lord Monteagle, Sir Christopher Blount, Sir Charles Percy, Ellis Jones, and Edward Bushell, and others. After they had dined, at the suggestion of Sir Charles Percy and the rest of the company they all crossed the Thames to go to the Globe, where the Lord Chamberlain's men were accustomed to play. They got there a little time before the play began, Sir Charles telling them that 'Henry the Fourth' would be acted. Sir Gelly adds that he does not know who arranged for that play to be acted, but he thinks that it was Sir Charles. The play, he concludes, was actually performed, and it included the killing of King Richard II.

There is also the examination of Augustine Phillips, Shakespeare's friend and fellow-actor, "servant unto the Lord Chamberlain and one of his players", who says that a day or two before the visit to the Globe, Sir Charles Percy, Sir Joscelin Percy, and Lord Monteagle, with others, spoke to some of the players in his (Phillips's) presence, asking them to perform the play of the deposing and killing of King Richard II, on the Saturday following. If they would undertake to do so they should have forty shillings more than their ordinary payment. Phillips says that he and his fellows wanted to act some other play, because they

¹ S P Dom Elizabeth, vol cclxxviii, p 78

considered that the play of King Richard was quite out of date and that there would scarcely be any audience for it, indeed perhaps none at all. However, they were ultimately prevailed upon to do as Sir Charles and his friends desired. The actors were paid the additional forty shillings, and the play was duly given.

Phillips, of course, may have been trying to be diplomatic, for as a matter of fact Shakespeare had only written 'The Life and Death of Richard the Second', some five or six years previously. However, it would seem that at that time a play—apparently even one of Shakespeare's—was usually soon considered to be out of date. Be this as it may, Sir Charles and his friends were simply hoping that the scenes of the abdication of the King, and of his subsequent murder at Pontefract Castle, would assist further to influence the minds of those present for the seditious project which they were contemplating.

However, we know that the plot failed to rouse much popular enthusiasm amongst the citizens of London, and Essex was proclaimed traitor. He was tried at Westminster Hall in February, 1600/1—at which time Sir Francis Bacon, his quondam friend, assisted in his prosecution—and he was sentenced to death and executed in the Tower of London on the following Ash Wednesday (25 Feb.), being about thirty-four years old. The Earl of Southampton was also sentenced to death, but was ultimately reprieved.

During the course of the trial Essex was thus accused by Secretary Cecil: "You have drawn into your net divers noble persons and gentlemen of birth, who are all undone by you." Amongst them was Grey Brydges, afterwards fifth Baron Chandos, of Sudeley Castle, a few miles from Dumbleton, and also in Gloucestershire. Grey Brydges suffered severely, for his

son Tracy was killed in his sight—one of the unfortunate few—during that Sunday morning mêlée on Ludgate Hill, whilst he himself had a narrow escape, for two bullets passed through his hat. Later on this Grey Brydges, on account of his great interests in Gloucestershire and the imposing style which he maintained at Sudeley Castle, became known as “The King of Cotswold”. It is also claimed for him that he was the author of *Horae Subseculivae*, a little book published in 1620 by Edward Blount, who himself about this time must have been closely associated with Heminge and Condell, and with the ultimate production of the First Folio, “Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed Blount 1623”.

Apparently there is little or no other existing evidence which affords additional details to Secretary Cecil’s reference to the undoing of those noble persons and gentlemen whom he stated had been enmeshed by Essex and Southampton. It seems very probable, however, that Lord Chandos withdrew to Sudeley Castle as soon as possible, and that Sir Charles Percy, his near neighbour, returned to Dumbleton after some months’ imprisonment in the Tower and the ultimate payment of a fine of £500.¹

The high authorities seem to have taken no action against the players at the Globe, although some complicity on their part was actually inferred, at least in the examinations of Sir Gelly Merrick and Augustine Phillips. At the moment Shakespeare may not have been at the Globe, and for the time being he certainly avoided any reference to the stirring events in which the Earl of Southampton, his influential friend and patron, had been so unfortunately concerned.

It has been suggested by several commentators that Shakespeare actually knew Sir Charles Percy, and that he may be making

¹ Rymer’s *Foedera*, vol. XVI, p. 452

some veiled allusion to him when, in the 'Second Part of King Henry IV',¹ he uses such a comparatively uncommon name as Dumbleton. The scene is laid in a street in London, into which there enter Sir John Falstaff with his page, who bears the knight's sword and buckler. At once Sir John commences a characteristic speech which he concludes by asking "What said Master Dumbleton about the satin for my short cloak and my slops?" to which the page replies "He said, sir, you should procure him better assurance than Bardolph, he would not take his bond and yours, he liked not the security"

However, it is as difficult to imagine that such a transcendent genius as Shakespeare would condescend to any poor device of this nature, as it is to imagine that he would take the trouble to pillory Sir Thomas Lucy in the character of Justice Shallow, actually some twelve years after the approximate date of the Charlecote deer-stealing tradition. Moreover, Shakespeare probably wrote the 'Second Part of King Henry IV' in 1598—if, indeed, not a little earlier—at which time, if the foregoing suggestion be correct, Sir Charles Percy's associations with Dumbleton would not yet have begun.

With respect to these matters there now remains to make reference to the curiously interesting holograph letter written by Sir Charles Percy, from Dumbleton, probably not long after he arrived there. It is to be found in the State Papers Domestic² and is, so far as I know, the only letter of his which is now in existence. The following is a literal transcription of it

Mr Carlington I am heere so pestred with contrie businesse that I shall not bee able as yet to come to London. If I stay heere long in

¹ Act I, Sc. 2

² S P Dom Elizabeth, 1598-1601, vol. CCLXXV, p. 146

this fashion, at my return I think you will find mee so dull that I shall bee taken for Justice Silence or Justice Shallow Wherefore I am to entreat you that you will take pittie of mee, and as occurrences shall searve, to send mee such news from time to time as shall happen, the knowledge of the which, though perhaps thee will not exempt mee from the opinion of a iustice Shallow at London, yet I will assure you thee will make mee passe for a very sufficient gentleman in Glocestershire If I doe not alwaies make you answere, I pray you doe not therefore desist from your charitable office, the place being so fruitfull from whence you write and heere so barren that it will make my head ake for invention But if anything happen heere that may bee unknowne unto you in those parts you shall not faile but to heare of it I pray you direct your letters to thee three cups in breed street,¹ where I have taken order for the sending of them down And so in the mean while I will ever remain

your assured friend

CHARLES PERCY

Dumbleton in Glocestshire

this 27 of December [² 1600]

[Postscript] *You need not to forbear sending of news hither in respect of their stalenes for I will assure you, heere thee will bee very new*

[Endorsed]

*To his very loving
friend Mr Carlington
geeve thees*

..1600.

¹ The Three Cups was a famous carriers' inn at this period Stow, writing in the year 1603, says that Bread-street "is now wholly inhabited by rich merchants and divers fair inns be there" Milton was born in this street in 1608 (cf p 29)

One other detail concerning this monument is of more than passing interest. At the back, between the figures, is a shield bearing arms on escutcheon, quartering the ancient arms of the Duke of Brabant and Lovaine with those of the family of Lucy, who bear the well-known coat *gules three lucies [pikes] hauriant argent*. Above the effigies there is another shield bearing quarterly the arms of the Duke of Brabant and Lovaine as before, with the arms of Lucy impaling Cocks. Thus, in looking upon this monument, we are unexpectedly reminded of those lines from 'The Merry Wives of Windsor',¹ written in 1599, which for so many years and so often have been recalled, in connection with Sir Thomas Lucy and the deer-stealing tradition.

The scene is Windsor, before Page's house, and Justice Shallow, his cousin Slender, and Sir Hugh Evans, the Welsh parson enter.

Shallow *Sir Hugh, persuade me not, I will make a Star-chamber matter of it, if he were twenty Sir John Falstaff's he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire*

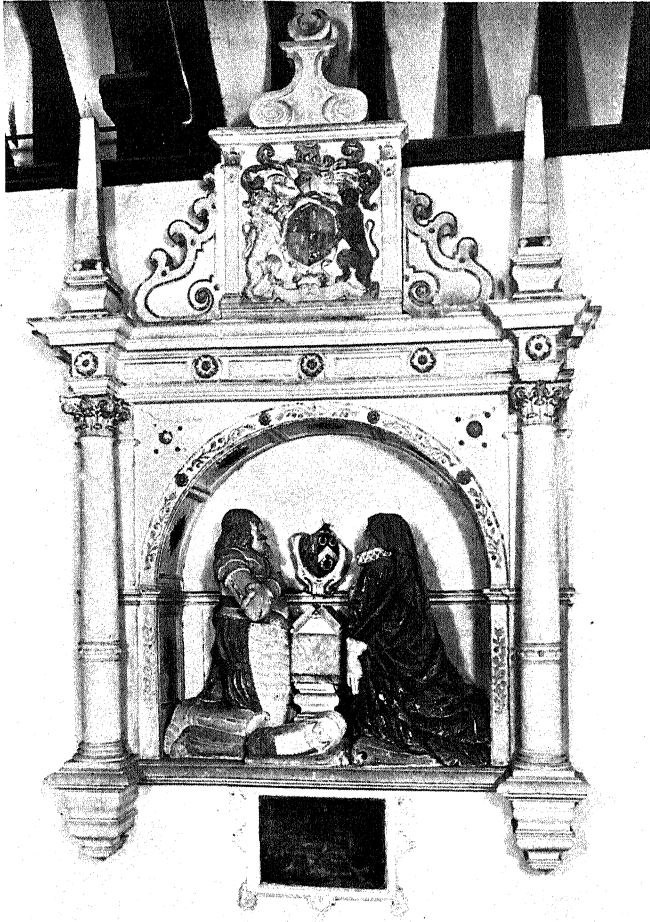
Slender *In the county of Gloster, justice of peace, and coram*

Shallow *Ay, cousin Slender, and Custalorum.*

Slender *Ay, and ratolorum too, and a gentleman born, master parson, who writes himself armigero, in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation,—armigero!*

Shallow *Ay, that we do, and have done any time these three hundred years*

Slender *All his successors, gone before him, have done't, and all his ancestors, that come after him, may they may give the dozen white lucies in their coat*



THE PERCY MONUMENT IN DUMBLETON CHURCH

Shallow *It is an old coat*

Evans *The dozen white louces do become an old coat well, it agrees well, passant it is a familiar beast to man, and signifies—love**

Shallow *The luce is the fresh fish, the salt fish is an old coat*

And so on

The arms of Lucy were first quartered with those of Percy in about the year 1377, when Henry de Percy became Earl of Northumberland and married Maud Lucy. The celebrated settlement¹ by which the quartered coat was rendered compulsory on the Earl's descendants, for whose sake the heirs in blood of Lucy were sacrificed, is recorded in the Fine Roll of Michaelmas Term, 8 Richard II (1384), and is amply recited in the Cumberland inquisition after Maud's death, 21 Sep 22 Richard II (1398)

1 *Archaeologia Aeliana*, New Series, pt xiv, Aug 1859, pp 174-5

CHAPTER VI

HUMPHREY DYSON

THE name of Humphrey Dyson, the London notary public who drew up the Brockhampton documents and witnessed (Plate VIII), probably at Broadway, the signature of John Savage on 23 May, 1617, suggested the possibility of a local connection, as there were contemporary Dysons living at Broadway and elsewhere in Worcestershire

Humphrey Dyson¹ also himself wrote out, on nine pages, the will of Henry Condell on 13 Dec 1627, the other witness being a certain Robert Dickens, who is described as being "servant unto the said notary", and who bore a name then also familiar in Broadway and its neighbourhood. However, there is at present no definite evidence that either Dyson or Dickens originated from those parts

In addition to his professional services rendered to Henry Condell, Dyson also witnessed the will and codicil thereto which Nicholas Tooley, the actor, made on 3 June, 1623, at which time Robert Dickens was also present, evidently as Dyson's clerk, each of them describing himself as in the Condell will

These actual associations of Dyson with at least two of Shakespeare's fellows—and indeed it is possible that he was associated with Shakespeare himself—have not, it seems, been definitely noted by any Shakespearean commentator. Collier² only says that Dyson "was a very curious collector of plays, tracts and broadsides, and not a few have come down to us with

¹ Cf p 1

² *Op cit* pp 149-50

his name upon them. In 1618 he published in 'folio', 'A Book containing all such Proclamations as were published during the Raigne of the late Queene Elizabeth'."

I have not been able to trace many of the "plays, tracts and broadsides" to which Collier referred, but, in their great work published in 1910, entitled *A Bibliography of Royal Proclamations of the Tudor and Stuart Sovereigns and of others published under Authority 1485-1714*, the late Earl of Crawford and Balcarres and Mr Robert Steele carried Dyson's work to a high pinnacle, and established his position as "the first collector of Proclamations"

Before becoming aware of the paper which, some twenty years ago, Mr Steele contributed to *The Library*¹—in which he notes the same documents in the State Papers²—I had found a further reference to Dyson

From these documents it appears that a brief has been filed in a cause respecting the validity of the will of one John Busby, deceased. Amongst the witnesses are Humphrey Dyson, scrivener, and Richard Spicer, doctor of medicine. A certain James Smith, who was one of the witnesses, should also have given evidence but—and it must be borne in mind that at that period there was, from certain sections of the public, still a strong fanatical opposition to anybody or anything connected with the playhouses and the players—he was excepted against because he had become an ordinary frequenter of taverns, playhouses, and players' company, and being a clergyman had professed that he should get more by players than by preaching the Word of God. It was stated of him that he had been turned out of his cure or

1 3rd Ser vol I, pp 144-51

2 S P Dom Chas I, 240/25

lecture in St Botolph's, Billingsgate, for keeping excessive company with players, and that he and others styled themselves of "The Order of the Fancy", whose practice was to drink excessively and to "speak nonsense"

One witness says that she entreated Dr Spicer to speak to Humphrey Dyson, a scrivener, to make John Busby's will, but Dyson having enquired in what case the decedent was, answered that he would not make a dead man's will, and refused to go. This was corroborated by Dr Spicer, and by Dyson himself, who adds that he was loth to meddle with any such business, unless he were assured that the testator's memory were good.

Doubtless Humphrey Dyson's father was one Christopher Dyson, a London citizen and wax-chandler, of the parish of St Alban, Wood Street, immediately adjacent to the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury, and having within its limits Silver Street, where, as already noted, Shakespeare was lodging in 1604. From Christopher Dyson's will,¹ which was proved in 1609, it appears that his two daughters were named Judith and Susanna—recalling in inverse order of age the names of Shakespeare's two daughters, Susanna, born in 1583, and Judith, one of the twin children born in 1585.

One of the overseers of this will was Thomas Savage, who would be identical with the Thomas Savage who has already been named in association with Shakespeare and others, in the action in the Court of Requests concerning the Globe Theatre in 1619. The other overseer was Mr Francis Roberts, possibly a relative of James Roberts of the Barbican, who printed editions of several of Shakespeare's plays, and who also printed and published the bills or placards of the various theatrical perform-

¹ Commissary Court of London, Reg. 21/92

Sealed and Solmned in presence
Humphrey Dyson Notary Public

H.C.C. 129

SIGNATURE OF HUMPHREY DYSON, 1617

ances The will was also witnessed by Thomas Savage, and by "Humphrey Dyson, Notary Publique"

Humphrey Dyson's own will¹ is dated 7 Jan 1632/3, with probate granted on 29 Feb of that year It consists, like Con-dell's, of nine sheets, and similarly is in Dyson's handwriting The codicil, written on a double sheet of paper, is in another hand Although the "witnesses" duly testify as such, the testator does not sign either the will or the codicil A broken seal of red wax impressed with a garb is affixed to the last sheet of the will

Humphrey Dyson proceeds to describe himself as citizen and wax-chandler, of the parish of St Olave, Old Jewry—again very close to St Mary Aldermanbury—and he adds that he is "crazy in body"

In the course of the will Dyson explains his honorary description, by bequeathing "to the Company of Wax-chandlers of the City of London of whom I am a member a silver and gilt cup with a cover valued at £5 with my name engraven thereon" As already shown, Humphrey Dyson's father had been a member of the same Company, and Thomas Dyson—Humphrey's son—is also similarly described in his will²

Other bequests of relevant interest in the will of Humphrey Dyson are

"To my eldest apprentice William Fittonn the last year of his term, and to my youngest apprentice Joseph Ferrett the two last years of his term, and I do hereby charge them to aid my executor in ordering and laying up of all draughts, precedents, and papers belonging to my profession to the end that they may

¹ P C C 17 Russell

² P C C 99 Russell

be safely kept and preserved, yet nevertheless for the bettering of their own understanding and for their greater ease in their trade and profession (if they follow my calling) my Executors shall permit them at all reasonable and seasonable times to have the free use of any of them, that they may take copies of such of them as they shall think fit desiring God to give them his grace”

Also “I earnestly desire him [William Jumper, testator’s executor] to have a care to put off and sell my books to the most profit that he can”, and “I give and bequeath unto my noble friend Sir William Paddy, Knight, to be by him put and given to the library of St John’s College in Oxford my Statutes at large printed in two great volumes of large paper”

Dyson’s copy of the *Statutes at Large*, bearing the date 1618, duly found its way to the said library, where it is still to be seen. Therein Sir William Paddy—physician to James I and friend of William Laud—pays his tribute to Dyson. He writes in his own hand

Regni haec Statuta, duobus voluminibus compacta, Humphredus Dyson, vir optimaе famae atque fidei Notarius publicus apud Londinenses, testamento suo mihi dicavit, una ut cum nostra supellectile Libraria, Bibliothecae Collegii Sancti Johannis Baptistae apud Oxonienses usui adessent et inservirent Will Paddy

Dyson’s wife was the daughter of Thomas Speght of the Precincts of St James in the Wall, London, gentleman, for this Speght in his will bequeathed, on 27 Feb 1620, “To my daughter Elizabeth the wife of Humfrey Dison £40”, and the witnesses to the will are “Hum Dyson, Notary publique” and Elizabeth Dyson, who makes her mark—which, of course, does not necessarily imply that she was illiterate

Speght, who had taken his degree of Master of Arts from Peterhouse, Cambridge, was an editor of Chaucer and Lydgate, and a schoolmaster

Joseph Ferrett, the "youngest apprentice"—who was evidently in his articles with Dyson—afterwards became a notary public, and one of his clients was the aforesaid Sir William Paddy, whose will he made in 1634

"Many of Dyson's books",¹ says Mr Steele, writing in 1903, "are to be found at the British Museum, several are at Dr Marsh's Library, Dublin, and some were recently sold at Sotheby's"

It must be admitted that Humphrey Dyson makes—at least at present—but a very slender link with Shakespeare and his fellows—and that therefore any reference to his sets of Proclamations is superfluous. However, all things considered, it would seem that at this juncture a brief note concerning them is here desirable. Therefore I have been privileged to examine all the five existing sets of these Proclamations which, as already shown, Dyson collected together about the year 1618, under circumstances which are a little difficult to understand

Concerning this matter the late Lord Crawford, who had examined all the sets, wrote²

"It seems probable from his close connexion with Bonham Norton the [King's Printer], that the proclamations in his sets were made up from copies in the King's Printing House. Some of the proclamations are obviously printers' proofs"

This is a very likely explanation. A few of the instances in the various sets are undoubtedly proofs, but the great majority

¹ E.g. *Musarum lachrymae*—reference 1070 l 13 (9)—upon the title-page of which he has written his name

² *Op cit* p xlv n

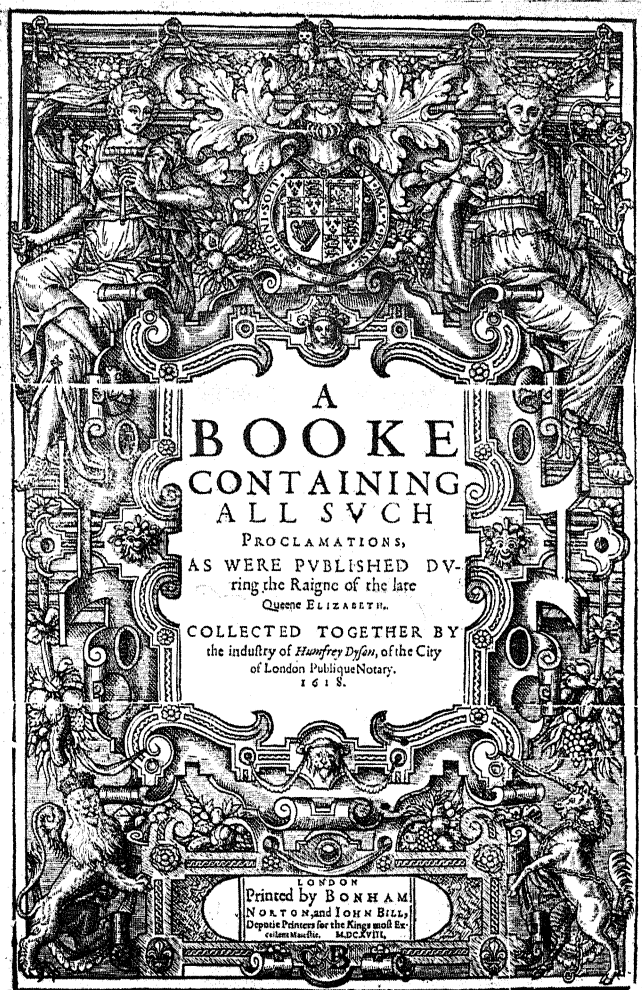
of the Proclamations must have been taken from the printer's stock whenever the opportunity arose. They are in nearly every instance in a very good state of preservation. It is evident from the Proclamations themselves—at least in three of the sets—that Dyson folded them as far as possible to a uniform size, endorsed them in most cases, and then kept them in bundles until he had as complete a series as possible. Ultimately, we will assume, he succeeded in making up these five sets as they now exist, more or less, with the possibility that there was a sixth set, of which Lord Crawford's instances, to which reference is made in his Preface, form a part.

Six sets would be Dyson's probable limit for, apart from the intricacies of collection in his time, it is unlikely that there are still in existence any other sets which remain unnotified.

That, by his industry, Dyson was able to make up the sets himself is evident from his title-page, illustrated herewith (Plate IX), to the Proclamations of Queen Elizabeth.

In some instances there are points of difference in the same Proclamation, usually in the setting-up or in the details of the initial letters and their embellishments. For example, if a comparison be made between the Proclamation against the Earl of Essex in 1600—being No. 47 in another collection of Proclamations from 1500 to 1600, in the library of Queen's College, Oxford—and the instance of the same Proclamation (Queen Elizabeth, No. 382) in the Dyson collection in the same library, these points of difference are at once obvious. Lord Crawford thus tentatively accounted for them:

“ I do not think it is generally known that of many Proclamations there were several different editions—or perhaps better described as settings-up of the type—all bearing the same



British Museum

THE DYSON TITLE-PAGE

date It is rather difficult to account for these repeated issues, but I almost think that a solution may be found if we assume that a considerable time may have elapsed between one and the other, and that they were issued as reminders of an order. There is, however, another plausible explanation Where a Proclamation was called for under short notice and in considerable numbers, it is more than probable that two or even three presses may have been at work at the same time, each of course having a separate setting-up of type "

With the exception of the Bodleian set, which is bound in its original boards, the sets are bound in covers of a date considerably later than 1618 This fact would seem to suggest that Dyson did not actually supply all the sets ready-bound, together with his own printed supplements of title-page and tables, and presumably it may help to account for the variety in the sets. Certainly, however, Dyson's title-page refers to "A Booke", but he may have used this term in the more elastic sense which it possessed in his time

The Proclamations were, of course, of various sizes, and consequently it was impossible to bind them satisfactorily unless many were inlaid on sheets of uniform size It is evident that two of the volumes in the sets were thus made up at a later date

The Dyson title-page (Plate IX) bears, in its upper compartment, the arms of James I in the centre, between Justice and Mercy The lower compartment has the lion and the unicorn supporting a cartouche containing the names of the King's Deputy Printers—Bonham Norton and John Bill—beneath which are the initials "C B" for Christopher Barker, who had been appointed Queen's Printer in 1577 In 1589 he obtained the exclusive patent for all State-printing and for religious books.

In examining this title-page it seemed that in the original engraving—although this is not so evident in a photograph—the unicorn had replaced another supporter, and that therefore the title-page had possibly seen service in the preceding reign. This proved to be the case. Mr Ronald B. McKerrow shows in his book¹ published in 1913 that the title-page with the arms of Queen Elizabeth in the upper compartment and a lion and a dragon at the foot had originally been the general title-page to the Bible published by Christopher Barker in 1578, it again appeared before the Apocrypha in the Bible that he published in 1583—of which title-page Mr McKerrow gives a reproduction—and it was used on later occasions during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

This title-page apparently did not make its re-appearance until 1616 when, with the arms of James I replacing those of Queen Elizabeth, and the unicorn taking the place of the dragon, it formed the general title-page of Barker's Bible (A V) in which it also came before the New Testament. In 1618, in addition to its use for Dyson's Book of Proclamations, it appears with the aforementioned *Statutes at Large*, also published by Bonham Norton and John Bill.

Dyson had, in all, three Tables printed, viz

(1) *A Table of all svch Proclamations, as were published during the Raigne of the late Queene Elizabeth*

(11) *An Alphabeticall Table containing an extract of all such matters and things, as are expressed in such Proclamations as were published during the Raigne of the late Queene Elizabeth*

(111) *A Table declaring the Titles of all such Proclamations, as*

¹ *Printers' and Publishers' Devices in England and Scotland 1485-1640*, fig. 204

haue been published in England, during the Reigne of our Soueraigne King Jame^s

The five sets are respectively to be found at

1 Antiquaries (Burlington House), Society of

This set—provenance unknown—has the Dyson title-page and the three Tables. It actually commences with a Proclamation dated 13 Aug. 1464, copied out by Dyson himself. Indeed most of the Proclamations in the first of the volumes are in his handwriting, for evidently he had found it difficult to collect many printed instances until he came to the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Herein again—unlike the other sets—there are many copies which have been supplied by Dyson and certified by him as having been compared with the originals. Moreover, the first eighteen years of the Queen's reign are particularly deficient in printed instances.

There is, however, an instance of the only Proclamation issued—on 10 July, 1553—by Lady Jane Grey—a very rare possession, with which Queen's College is also supplied.

In this set, in its present state, there are no engravings other than that of a perfect copy of the curiously interesting map of England and Wales,¹ accompanied by a Proclamation dated 4 March, 1604, being "A Note of the head-lands of England, as they beare one from another, agreeing with the plot of the description of the Countrey, with their seuerall distances, as followeth."

However, bound into a volume in the collection of Broad-sides—many of which obviously belonged to Dyson—in the

¹ Cf. R. Steele, *op cit* vol. 1, p. 117 (No. 1011). A copy of the map forms the frontispiece to the volume in question.

Society's possession, there are two engravings which, without doubt, once originally belonged to this set. They are a portrait of Mary, Queen of Scots, and a portrait of Queen Elizabeth, as in the Bodleian set.

2 Bodleian Library, Oxford

This set, which came to the library in the bequest of Richard Rawlinson, in 1755, is bound in one volume entitled *Proclamations by Queen Elizabeth*, some of which have been copied out by Dyson. It does not possess his title-page, but it has the first two Tables above mentioned. All the Proclamations have been enclosed and otherwise treated by Dyson with those carefully ruled lines—sometimes smudged—which are a characteristic of all his sets.

At least one Proclamation (No. 24) bears an original signature of Queen Elizabeth, and others bear that of Lord Burleigh.

This set—which also has a copy, somewhat damaged, of the map of England and Wales—is unique in the possession of no less than seven illustrations. Briefly described, they are

(1) Frontispiece. Queen Elizabeth, who is thus eulogized

*“Lo here her Type, who was of late, the Propp of Belgia,
Stay of France*

*Spaines Foyle, Faith's Shield, and Queen of STATE, of Armes,
and Learning, FATE, and Chance,*

*In briefe, of women, nere was seene so greate a Prince, so good
a Queene*

ELIZABETHA REGINA”

(2) Arms, tricked in colours, of “*Marie Queene Dolphines of France*”.

(3) “ *Darnley, King of Scotland, and Marie, Queen of Scotland* ” This portrait, by Renold Elstracke, is marked “supposed to be unique”

(4) “ *Lord Howard, Duke of Norfolk* ”

(5) “ *In effigiem Mariae Reginae, Jacob Magni Britan Reg Matris* ”

In a cartouche there are the following lines, in Dyson’s handwriting

“ *The Armes of Marie Queen Dolphines of ffrawnce
The Nobillest Lady in earth for till aduauunce
Off Scotland queene, and of Ingland also,
Off Ireland als, God haith providit so* ”

(6) “ *Charles, Earl of Nottingham* ” Marked “very rare”

(7) “ *The most noble Robert Earle of Essex her Maesties lieutenant, and Governour generall of the Kingdome of Irland 1601* ”

This portrait is similar to the portrait in the British Museum set

3 British Museum

Attached to this set,¹ which is entitled *Queen Elizabeth’s Proclamations, 1559–1602 Collected by Humphrey Dyson, Clerk of Parliament, 1618*—in the Grenville library—is a note which, as will be noted, contains several evident errors. Presumably it was written by the Hon Thomas Grenville (1755–1846), and of course before this set went to the British Museum. The note is as follows

“ *This is an extraordinary and probably unique Collection of*

¹ From the lettering in the margin of the title-page to this set it seems evident that it belonged originally to Sir Julius Caesar (1558–1636), who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1606, and Master of the Rolls from 1614 to 1636

all the Proclamations of Q Elizabeth from her accession in 1559 [sic] to her death in 1603 They were collected by Humphrey Dyson who was a Notary publick and Clerk of the Parliament He was so proud of this Collection that he not only compiled two Tables of their contents but printed a Title-Page for them by Bonham and Norton, 1618 The title appears to be noticed by Lowndes,¹ but apparently with no knowledge of the existence of the book The Proclamations are above 300 in number Those of Charles 2nd in Ld Guildford's Sale sold for above 200 L I have said probably unique I mean in the perfect state in which it is found There is a fine copy in the Bodleian Library but wanting the Title Page A still more curious copy but also wanting the Title Page is in Queen's College, Oxford That valuable copy has several of the Proclamations with Q Elizabeth's signature and several with Lord Burleigh's, the volume is preceded by several Proclamations of H 8 and concludes with the only one known of Jane Grey The B Museum has the Title Page and Index but none of the Proclamations

This set possesses the Dyson title-page and also two of the Tables Its only illustration is the Essex portrait (Plate VI), to which reference has already been made It is gummed to the back of the Proclamation made against the Earl in 1600

In several instances, Dyson has copied out the Proclamations, and to others he has added the missing titles

After considerable research no evidence is forthcoming to support the above statement that Dyson was "Clerk of the Parliament" in 1618 There was a Jeremiah Dyson² (1722-76)

¹ Cf W T Lowndes, *Bibliographer's Manual*

² Cf *Dictionary of National Biography*

who was Clerk of the House from 1748 to 1762, but his origin is uncertain

4. Privy Council Office (Whitehall).

The set which was noted by Lord Crawford as being in the library of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, was removed from their offices in Downing Street some years ago, owing to the need for space in that library. It is now at the Privy Council Office, Whitehall, and consists of one volume entitled *Proclamations of Queen Elizabeth, 1558 to 1602*. It has the printed title-page, inlaid, but none of the Tables, nor is there any illustration.

The first Proclamation is entitled, in Dyson's handwriting *A Letter by the Queene to the Lord Maior of London to be published within the City for the punishment of such as by Colour of a Proclamation published 13 July A^o 5 Eliz [1563] have wrongfully seized the goods and persons of ffrenchemen and Denizens*

The titles of a number of the succeeding Proclamations are written by Dyson, who also makes a few notes here and there.

The last Proclamation in this set bears the book-stamp (2" × $\frac{3}{4}$ ") *Hvmfridvs Dyson, Notarius publicus, me possidet, 1611*. This is the only instance, in the five sets, of the use of this book-stamp.

At the Privy Council Office there was also formerly a set of the Proclamations of James I, bound in two volumes, of which the first volume (1603-13) has been missing for many years. The second volume, and a volume of *Proclamations of Charles I, 1625 to 1629*, both contain evidences which may be attributable to Dyson, who, as already shown, died late in 1632.

5 Queen's College, Oxford

This great collection of Proclamations was bequeathed to the college by Sir Joseph Williamson, Secretary of State to Charles II. The Dyson set consists of two volumes, of which the first is of Proclamations by Queen Elizabeth, and the second of Proclamations of James I.

The first volume has the Dyson title-page and the first two of the printed Tables, as also an instance of the only Proclamation made by Lady Jane Grey. The second volume has an ornate title-page by Renold Elstracke—which does not appear in any other of the sets—and the third of the printed Tables. Apart from a copy of the map of England and Wales, there is no other illustration in either volume.

Although Humphrey Dyson has thus far been somewhat fugitive of research, it seems possible that eventually he, that literary and very energetic notary public—*vir optimaе famaе atque fidei*—to whom the lure of the printed word was so attractive, may be found to have been in some way associated with his friend Henry Condell, and with Heminge, in the publication of the First Folio.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST FOLIO AND THE POEMS

IT is generally considered that Heminge and Condell—than whom certainly there were no men better qualified for the purpose—must have commenced collecting and editing the works of Shakespeare about the year 1619, three years after his death and soon after the death of Richard Burbage. In August of that year it would seem highly probable, as already shown,¹ that Condell visited Stratford-upon-Avon, there to commence the work of collecting the plays, and thus to do that “office to the dead” and to put an end to the prevalent abuse of “divers stolen and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors”, to which Heminge and he refer thus emphatically in their address “To the great Variety of Readers” Ultimately their book was published in 1623, in folio, at the price of twenty shillings,² the title-page reading thus:

MR WILLIAM SHAKESPEARES COMEDIES, HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES Published according to the True Originall
Copies London Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed Blount
1623

¹ Cf p 4

² On 16 May, 1922, a First Folio from the Burdett-Coutts library was sold at Sotheby's for £8600, and at the same sale another copy, which about the year 1650 had belonged to Ralph Sheldon, of Weston, co Warwick, sold for £5400. On 21 June, 1928, a copy—hitherto unrecorded—of the First Folio, wanting the leaf of verses by Ben Jonson, and four leaves in the body of the book, was sold for £8500. About the same time another copy, “with unique features in the portrait of the author” was sold to an American buyer for £13,000.

and, in a colophon

Printed at the charges of W Jaggard, Ed Blount, I Smithweeke,
and W Aspley

Apparently there was no great demand for the book. A second edition¹ was not called for until 1632, and long before that time Heminge and Condell had joined "the royal fellowship of death"

It has been said—probably with little exaggeration—that very few readers of Shakespeare ever give a thought to the introductions to the First Folio, those very human documents which have been left to us by Heminge and Condell, themselves true friends of Shakespeare and truly honourable in their great undertaking "to keep the memory of so worthy a Friend and Fellow alive "

The present circumstances carefully considered, it seems well that these delightful introductions should once more be reprinted, and in modernized terms

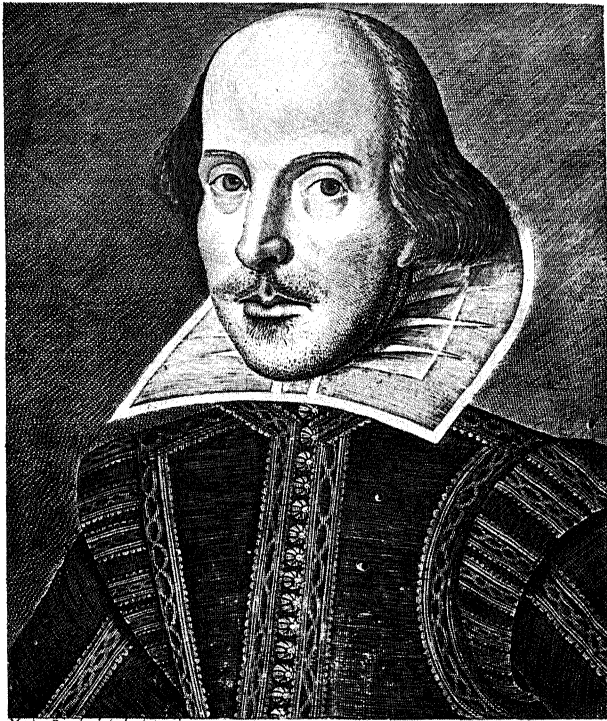
"The Epistle Dedicatorie", addressed "To the Most Noble and Incomparable Paire of Brethren", William, Earl of Pembroke, and Philip, Earl of Montgomery, runs thus

Whilst we study to be thankful in our particular for the many favours we have received from your Lordships, we are fallen upon the ill fortune to mingle two of the most diverse things that can be, fear and rashness, rashness in the enterprise, and fear of the success For, when we value the places your Highnesses sustain, we cannot but know their dignity greater than to descend to the reading of these trifles, and while we name them trifles, we have deprived ourselves of the defence of our Dedication But since your Lordships have been pleased to think these trifles something hereto-

1 A Second Folio was sold on 20 July, 1928, for £1700

MR. WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARES
COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies.



Martin Droghda sculptor London

LONDON
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.

British Museum

THE FIRST FOLIO TITLE-PAGE

fore, and have prosecuted both them and their Author living, with so much favour, we hope that (they out-living him and he not having the fate, common with some, to be executor to his own writings) you will use the like indulgence toward them you have done unto their parent There is a great difference whether any Book choose his Patrons, or find them This hath done both For so much were your Lordships' likings of the several parts when they were acted, as before they were published, the Volume asked to be yours We have but collected them and done an office to the dead, to procure his Orphans, Guardians, without ambition either of self-profit or fame only to keep the memory of so worthy a Friend and Fellow alive as was our SHAKESPEARE, by humble offer of his plays to your most noble patronage Wherein, as we have justly observed no man to come near your Lordships but with a kind of religious address, it hath been the height of our care, who are the Presenters, to make the present worthy of your Highnesses by the perfection But there we must also crave our abilities to be considered, my Lords We cannot go beyond our own powers Country hands reach forth milk, cream, fruits, or what they have and many Nations (we have heard) that had not gums and incense obtained their requests with a leavened cake It was no fault to approach their Gods by what means they could and the most though meanest of things are made more precious when they are dedicated to Temples In that name therefore we most humbly consecrate to your Highnesses these remains of your servant Shakespeare, that what delight is in them may be ever your Lordships', the reputation his and the faults ours, if any be committed by a pair so careful to show their gratitude both to the living and the dead as is

Your Lordships' most bounden,

JOHN HEMINGE

HENRY CONDELL

There then follows the address

To the great Variety of Readers

*From the most able, to him that can but spell There you are numbered We had rather you were weighed Especially when the fate of all Books depends upon your capacities and not of your heads alone but of your purses Well! It is now public, and you will stand for your privileges we know to read and censure Do so, but buy it first That doth best commend a Book, the Stationer says Then, how odd soever your brains be or your wisdoms, make your licence the same, and spare not Judge your six-pen'orth, your shilling's worth, your five shillings' worth at a time, or higher, so you rise to the just rates, and welcome But, whatever you do, Buy Censure will not drive a Trade, or make the Jack go And though you be a Magistrate of wit, and sit on the Stage at Blackfriars, or the Cock-pit, to arraign Plays daily, know, these Plays have had their trial already and stood out all Appeals, and do now come forth quitted rather by a Decree of Court, than any purchased Letters of commendation **

It had been a thing, we confess, worthy to have been wished that the Author himself had lived to have set forth and overseen his own writings, but since it has been ordained otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envy his Friends the office of their care and pain to have collected and published them, and so to have published them, as where (before) you were abused with divers stolen and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors that exposed them even those are now offered to your view cured and perfect of their limbs, and all the rest, absolute in their numbers, as he conceived them, who as he was a happy imitator of Nature was a most

gentle expresser of it His mind and hand went together and what he thought he uttered with that easiness that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers But it is not our province, who only gather his works and give them you, to praise him It is yours' that read him And there we hope, to your divers capacities, you will find enough both to draw and hold you for his wit can no more lie hid than it could be lost Read him, therefore, and again and again and if then you do not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger not to understand him And so we leave you to other of his Friends, whom if you need can be your guides if you need them not, you can lead yourselves and others And such Readers we wish him

JOHN HEMINGE

HENRIE CONDELL

After the dedicatory verses of Leonard Digges and "I M" (James Mabbe), there follows a list of "The Names of the Principall Actors in all these Playes", in which Shakespeare comes first, John Hemmings [*sic*] third, and Henry Condell eighth in a list of twenty-six names

Leonard Digges, who wrote two poems in praise of Shakespeare, must also have lived for some years in the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury. He was born in 1588, being the son of Thomas Digges, the famous mathematician, who died in 1595, a greatly respected resident in that parish, whose name duly appears in the contemporary Lay Subsidy Rolls. It is only to be found once in the St Mary's register, when on 19 July, 1594, "Ursula, daughter of Mr Thomas Digges esquire" was baptized.

The Digges family were close neighbours of the Heminges and the Condells, and doubtless as time went on Leonard Digges became known intimately both to John Heminge and to Henry

Condell, and even to Shakespeare himself and to Ben Jonson In 1617 he translated Claudian's *Rape of Proserpine* and in other ways had already shown his literary merit when, in 1623, he contributed to the First Folio his dedicatory verses "To the memorie of the deceased Authour Maister W Shakespeare", thus

Shake-speare, at length thy pious fellowes giue
 The world thy Workes thy Workes, by which, out-live
 Thy Tombe, thy name must when that stone is rent,
 And Time dissolues thy Stratford Monument,
 Here we alive shall view thee still This Booke,
 When Brasse and Marble fade, shall make thee looke
 Fresh to all Ages when Posteritie
 Shall loath what's new, thinke all is prodegie
 That is not Shake-speares, eu'ry Line, each Verse
 Here shall reuiue, redeeme thee from thy Herse
 Nor Fire, nor cankring Age, as Naso said,
 Of his, thy wit-fraught Booke shall once inuade
 Nor shall I e'er beleue, or thinke thee dead
 (Though must), vntill our bankrout Stage be sped
 (Impossible) with some new straine t'out-do
 Passions of Iuliet, and her Romeo,
 Or till I heare a Scene more nobly take,
 Then when thy half-Sword parlying Romans spake
 Till these, till any of thy Volumes rest
 Shall with more fire, more feeling be exprest,
 Be sure, our Shake-speare, thou canst neuer dye,
 But crown'd with Lawrell, liue eternally

L DIGGES

POEMS
VVITTEN
BY
WIL. SHAKE-SPEARE.
Gent.



Printed at *London* by *Tho. Cotes*, and are
to be sold by *John Benson*, dwelling in
S^t. Dunstons Church yard. 1649.

Trinity College, Cambridge

TITLE-PAGE OF THE CAPELL COPY OF THE POEMS

The monument in Stratford-upon-Avon church—to which Digges refers—had possibly been erected, Sir Sidney Lee thinks, “some three years earlier” Digges died in 1635, and in the 1640 edition of Shakespeare’s poems there appeared a longer and more detailed poem which had been written by him It would not indeed be surprising if he should prove also to have been the author of the famous inscription upon the panel of the “Stratford Monument”

Until the year 1896 there was no memorial in the parish of St Mary Aldermanbury to mark its very close associations with Heminge and Condell In that year the late Charles Clement Walker, of Lilleshall Old Hall, co Salop, generously presented a memorial which was erected in the churchyard, and was unveiled by the Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of London (Sir G F. Faudel Phillips, Bart), on 15 July, 1896, when Sir Henry Irving and other well-known actors were present, a distinguished assembly

At that time Mr Walker also wrote and published a small book, containing various illustrations of the monument, entitled *John Heminge and Henry Condell, Friends and Fellow-Actors of Shakespeare, and what the world owes to them* The book concludes with details concerning the bust of Shakespeare which surmounts the monument, beneath which bust, “there being no likeness existing of Heminge and Condell, it was thought more suitable to produce a model of the First Folio”

Twenty-seven years later, on 21 April, 1923, the London Shakespeare League were happily associated with the Rev Prebendary H A Mason (Vicar) in a Service of Thanksgiving with special reference to Heminge and Condell, held in the church of St Mary Aldermanbury, during the celebrations connected

with the Tercentenary of the First Folio At that Service an address was given by His Grace the then Lord Archbishop of Canterbury—now Lord Davidson of Lambeth—towards the close of which a great tribute was paid to the memory of Heminge and Condell The Archbishop said

There exists no single letter of Shakespeare's, not one recorded conversation, no character of him drawn with any fullness by a contemporary If such there were we should be ceaselessly pressing it for more than it could carry In lack of it we are thrown upon the presentments which his pen left us of human worth, human caprice, human gaiety, human sorrow, human heroism, human villainy, and the possibility and range of each

And it has become ours by means of what those stage comrades of his, those loyal and proven friends, deliberately did in salving from destruction and committing to our reverent keeping the handiwork of the most redoubtable student of human life in shade and sunshine whom this world has ever known We are their debtors beyond all reckoning, and our own life and conduct of God's good grace should become thereby the worthier of such a trust

At the same time the Worshipful Company of Stationers published a brochure, most worthily produced and illustrated *In Commemoration of the First Folio Tercentenary—A Re-setting of the Preliminary Matter of the First Folio, with a Catalogue of Shakespeariana Exhibited in the Hall of The Worshipful Company of Stationers, Illustrative Facsimiles, and Introduction by Sir Israel Gollancz, Litt.D, F B A, Chairman of The Shakespeare Association*

This brochure contains a facsimile of the lines addressed "To my good freandes Mr John Heminges and Henry Condall",

which came to light some years ago—to which there is no reference in the last edition (1925) of Sir Sidney Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare*—and which show how greatly the willing and devoted labours of Heminge and Condell were appreciated by an unnamed contemporary. They come from an early seventeenth-century manuscript formerly belonging to the Salisbury family, and now in the possession of the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. They had already been published by Sir Israel Gollancz in *The Times Literary Supplement* (26 June, 1922), and a photostat copy of them was received by Birmingham Reference Library, from Mr—now Sir—John Ballinger (Librarian of the National Library of Wales) in August, 1923.

The lines, here modernized, are as follows

To my good friends Mr John Hemings and Henry Condall

*To you that jointly, with undaunted pains,
Vouchsafed to chant to us these noble strains,
How much you merit by it is not said,
But you have pleased the living, loved the dead,
Raised from the womb of earth a richer mine
Than Cortes could with all his Casteline
Associates, they did but dig for gold,
But you for treasure much more manifold*

Concerning them Sir Israel Gollancz wrote "The lines are not of a high order of poetic art, but are none the less of very great interest from many points of view. They attest, against certain modern fantastic heresies, that it was 'love' for Shakespeare that prompted the editors to get together his writings 'with undaunted pains', that their devotion to Shakespeare was well known, that the treasure collected by them was recognized

as more glorious than gold from the richest mines of Mexico, such as Cortes shared with his 'Casteline'—i.e. officers (or perhaps vaguely Castilians—i.e. Spaniards), though this plural form is not elsewhere recorded. The reference to Cortes must have alluded to some familiar incident in the history of the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, which had perhaps figured in the lost play of *The West Indies*, written by William Haughton in conjunction with Wentworth Smith and John Day, and acted in 1601'

In the Hanley Court Collection there is an inventory¹ of books, a document which I found loose between the pages of a ledger formerly belonging to Walter Savage of Broadway (1628-1706).

This inventory, which details the titles and assessed values of thirty-eight books, is undated, but the fact that it was placed amongst the accounts for the year 1667, together with a bill bearing that date, may help to make it contemporary with them. It is in the handwriting of Walter Savage's son, also named Walter, who was born in 1651, and who is mentioned as "Watt" on several occasions in the ledger. He was the grandson of Walter Savage, and Elizabeth, his wife, *née* Hall, and thus he may ultimately prove to have had the distinction of a remote family connection with Shakespeare. It has therefore been of interest to find in this inventory, which includes the titles of some interesting books, an item (Plate XII) of outstanding importance.

Shakespears Poems 00 00 08

A collection of the *Poems*, with certain omissions, had been first published in octavo in 1639-1640, with the title *Poems Written*

28.	Plutarchi vitæ epitomæ —	00. 02.	0 8.
29.	Theophrasti Historia plantarum —	00. 00.	0 8.
30.	Claudii opus —	00. 00.	00.
31.	Plutarchi vitæ epitomæ —	00. 00.	0 8.
32.	Seneca & Bruto's logicæ —	00. 00.	0 8.
33.	Seneca's Poem —	00. 00.	0 8.
34.	Claudius Poem —	01. 00.	0 4.
35.	A Compendium of logic & rhetoric in English. —	00. 01.	00.
36.	Quintus Curtius de gestis Alexandri —	00. 00.	0 8.
37.	Ridley's dictionary —	00. 08.	00

by *Wil Shake-speare Gent* The published price of this little volume was one shilling and fourpence, and therefore Walter Savage's copy at Broadway was valued, some thirty years after, at half-price

It is also recorded that "Dr Bliss [1787-1857] had a leaf of this edition with a contemporary manuscript note which stated that it passed through the press in 1639, and was issued ready-bound for fifteen pence" ¹

A first edition of the *Poems* is of course extremely rare in these days Sir Sidney Lee, in 1915,² notes that "a perfect copy, formerly belonging to Robert Hoe of New York, was sold in New York on May 3, 1911, for £3200, the highest price yet reached" A copy which sold for £44 in 1864, was sold on 17 May, 1922, at Sotheby's, during the dispersal of the Burdett-Coutts library, for £1400

Probably Walter Savage's copy of the *Poems* disappeared long ago, but it is quite possible that it was at one time in the possession of William Oldys, the antiquary, who—as appears elsewhere³—was remotely connected with the Savages, and who is said to have been the possessor of "a copy of Shakespeare's *Poems* which, in 1762, was sold for one shilling" ⁴

The two copies of the *Poems* now in the British Museum Library unfortunately supply no evidence as to their first owners, and it seems that such is the case with the other copies, or at least with those other four which are said still to remain in this country Certainly the finely-conditioned Capell copy in the library at Trinity College, Cambridge, contains no such evidence

¹ Jaggard, *Shakespearean Bibliography* (1911 ed), p 433

² *Op cit* p 547 n

³ *Cf* Introduction

⁴ *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Ser 1, 1 Feb 1862, p 84

CHAPTER VIII

THE BLOUNTS OF ASTLEY, CO WORCESTER

IT appears always to have been traditional to give Astley, co Warwick, as being the parish from which the Combes came to Stratford-upon-Avon in the reign of Henry VIII

This tradition probably arose from the fact that the Warwickshire Visitations¹ of 1619 and of 1682-1683 both give the pedigree of *Combe of Ashley in Com War*. However, the earlier Visitation compromises matters by beginning with a John Combe² of Ashley, co Warwick, and then proceeding to note his son, John, as being of Ashley, co Worcester. There is no parish of Ashley in either county, but there is a parish of Astley in both of them.

The additional location, in the Visitation of 1619, of the Blounts, lords of the manor of Astley—who were connections and neighbours of the Combes³—as being of “Glasson parke”, appears hitherto to have been unidentified, and consequently it would seem that the origin of the Combes has invariably been attributed to Astley, co Warwick, a parish a few miles south-west of Nuneaton.

In this said Visitation of 1619 it is stated, under the pedigree of Reynolds, that *Hugo Reynolds de Stretford in Com' War* married *Jocosa filia Rob'ti Blount de Glasson parke iuxta Ashley*.

¹ Publications of the Harleian Society

² The will of a John Combes of Astley, co Worcester, was proved on 7 April, 1543 at Worcester (*Cal Wores Wills*, 1543-4, File 1, 144)

³ Sir Edward Blount, a kinsman of the notorious John Combes of Stratford-upon-Avon, was one of the three executors of his will, which he made on 28 Jan 1612/13

However, it is now definitely evidenced by the Hanley Court document,¹ to which an extended reference is here made, under the Halls of Idlicote,² that the said Jocosa or Joyce Reynolds—who married, secondly, Richard Hall of Idlicote—was the daughter of Walter Blount, esquire, of Astley, a Worcestershire parish three miles south-west of Stourport, and now containing Astley Hall, the residence of the late Prime Minister (Rt Hon Stanley Baldwin, P C, M P)

Walter Blount, who lived at Glasshampton—or Glasson—in Astley, died on 3 Oct 1561, and Isabel (*née* Acton, of Acton Hall, Ombersley, co Worcester), his wife, died on 8 Jan 1562. Their tomb (Plate XIII) with their effigies, is to be seen in the north chapel of Astley church, with an inscription³. On the north and south sides of this tomb are the figures of their children, amongst whom the said Joyce appears.

The original will⁴ of this Walter Blount—who was a county justice of the peace—is in the Worcestershire files now in Birmingham Probate Registry. It was made in May, 1561, and therein the testator refers to “Joyce Hall, my daughter”, and appoints Richard Hall to be one of his executors, who is “to take for his pains my best silver bowl”.

Attached to this will is the inventory of Walter Blount's goods and chattels, which included several coverings of tapestry-work—one of which was of “home making”—and also a standing cup of silver and gold, two bowls of silver and gold, one bowl of silver, two goblets of silver and gold with a cover, one salt of silver and gold with a cover, a salt of silver and gold, one spoon of silver and gold, fourteen spoons of silver, one chain

1 H C C 384

2 pp 108-9

3 Nash, *Worcestershire*, vol 1, p 43

4 1561 118

of gold and three rings, and a small collection of the armour necessary at that period

In the same chapel in Astley church is the tomb of Walter Blount's son, Robert, who died in 1573, and whose wife Anne (*née* Davies) was still living at the time when the tomb was erected. Both tombs bear the arms of Blount and of Acton.

This Robert Blount made his will¹ shortly before his death, in 1573. It contains some information of relevant genealogical importance.

"To Frances Raynouldes, daughter of my sister Hall by her first husband, Hugh Raynouldes, 20s, and to Elizabeth Hall and Mary Hall daughters of my said sister by her now husband [Richard Hall] 20s apiece"

The testator's reference to the Blount tomb in Astley church is also of particular interest. He says

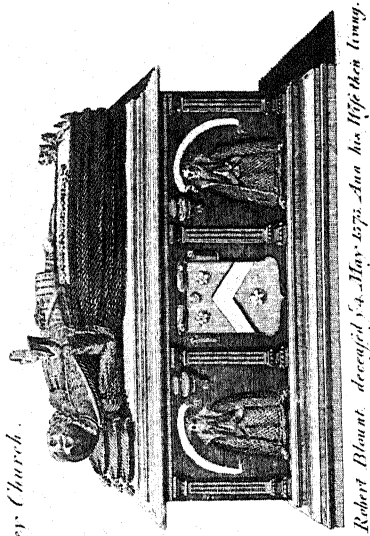
"My will is that my said overseers shall bestow £40 in and about the making of two tombs in the church of Astley aforesaid, the one for Walter Blount esquire, father of me the said Robert Blount and Isabel his wife, and the other for myself and Anne my wife, or more, at the discretion of my overseers"

Alderman Hugh Reynolds, who was a well-known inhabitant of Stratford-upon-Avon, made his will² on 21 Aug. 1556, at which time he appointed his "well-beloved father-in-law, Walter Blount" to be the trusty supervisor of his affairs. This will and the interesting inventory of the goods and chattels in and around his house there, enable a vivid visualization of the home to which Joyce Blount came as his bride. To her, amongst

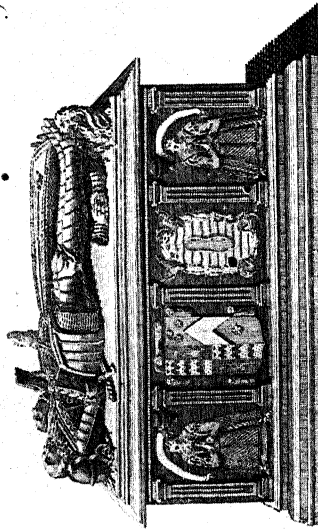
¹ P C C 22 Peter

² P C C 19 Ketchyn. Details of this will and of the inventory have been published by the Rev E I Fripp, in *Notes and Queries*, 13 Nov. 1920, and in his *Shakespeare's Stratford*, p. 41.

Monuments in Astley Church.



Robert Blount, deceased 14 May 1573. Ann his Wife then living.



Walter Blount, deceased 10 Oct. 1581. Spiced his Wife 8 Jan 1582.

THE BLOUNT TOMBS IN ASTLEY CHURCH

other bequests, he left the tithes of Shottery By this marriage there were six children—two sons and four daughters—of whom the daughters, at least, were all under age at the time of their father's death

The elder son, Hugh, died without issue The second son, Thomas, followed his father's example and chose his wife from the heart of Worcestershire, in the person of Margaret Gower, daughter and co-heiress of William Gower, esquire, of Redmarley in the parish of Great Witley, adjacent to Astley, but again attributed—in the Harleian pedigree—to Warwickshire

The eldest son of this Thomas and Margaret Reynolds was named William, possibly after Shakespeare, who may have been his godfather and who, in any case, left to him—to William Reynolds, gentleman—"twenty-six shillings and eightpence, to buy him a ring", when he made his will on Lady Day, 1616

The inventory in question is now preserved at Shakespeare's Birthplace, whither it came some years ago through the interest of the late Sir C S Tomes, of Manington Hall, Aylsham, co Norfolk, into whose possession it had passed from his father, John Tomes A fairly successful transcript of this inventory was made in 1869, by the late R F Tomes, together with a pedigree of Reynolds ¹ Two of the appraisers of the possessions of Hugh Reynolds were Adrian Quyny and John Burbage, friends and colleagues of John Shakespeare

It does not seem probable that there was any connection between the family of Blount, of Astley, and Edward Blount, who was so closely concerned with the publication of the First Folio He, according to the ample evidence of the registers of

¹ Cf *Warwickshire Antiquarian Magazine* (pt III)

the Worshipful Company of Stationers, was a son of Ralph Blount, merchant taylor, of London. It may be noted, however, that Sir Alexander Croke, in his *Genealogical History of the Croke Family surnamed Le Blount*, represents him as being the son of John Blount, of St Philip's, Bristol, and grandson of John Blount, of Eldersfield, a Worcestershire village, some nine miles from Gloucester.

CHAPTER IX

THE HALLS OF IDLICOTE, CO WARWICK

THE discovery in the Hanley Court Collection—wherein there is also a schedule¹ of seventy-two early deeds mainly connected with the family of Somerville and property in cos Warwick, Worcester and Gloucester—of a number of documents closely concerning Richard Hall of Idlicote, and the fact that I had had the privilege, a long time since, of discussing this family with Mrs C C Stopes, made it seem possible that now at last some definite evidence of the origin² of Dr John Hall, who married Susanna, Shakespeare's elder daughter in 1607, might be forthcoming Mrs Stopes,³ in her chapter on Dr John Hall, wrote

I have a strong impression, which may be confirmed later by researches in registers and wills, that he was connected with Idlicote, in Kington Hundred My reasons are the following There was a family called Hall residing there at that date It is not mentioned by Dugdale, who only speaks of the Underhills and states that the village contained sixteen houses, but in "A catalogue of all the noblemen and gentlemen resident in Warwick, 1577-8, by Henry Ferrers, of Baddesley" published in Nichols's Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica, vol VII, p 298, I find

¹ H C C 650

² The Idlicote register, which begins in 1556, contains no reference to John Hall, who was born in 1575, and there are no contemporary wills either of Hall or Savage which might be informative There is no pedigree of Hall of Idlicote in the Warwickshire Visitations

³ Shakespeare's Warwickshire Contemporaries, pp 174-86

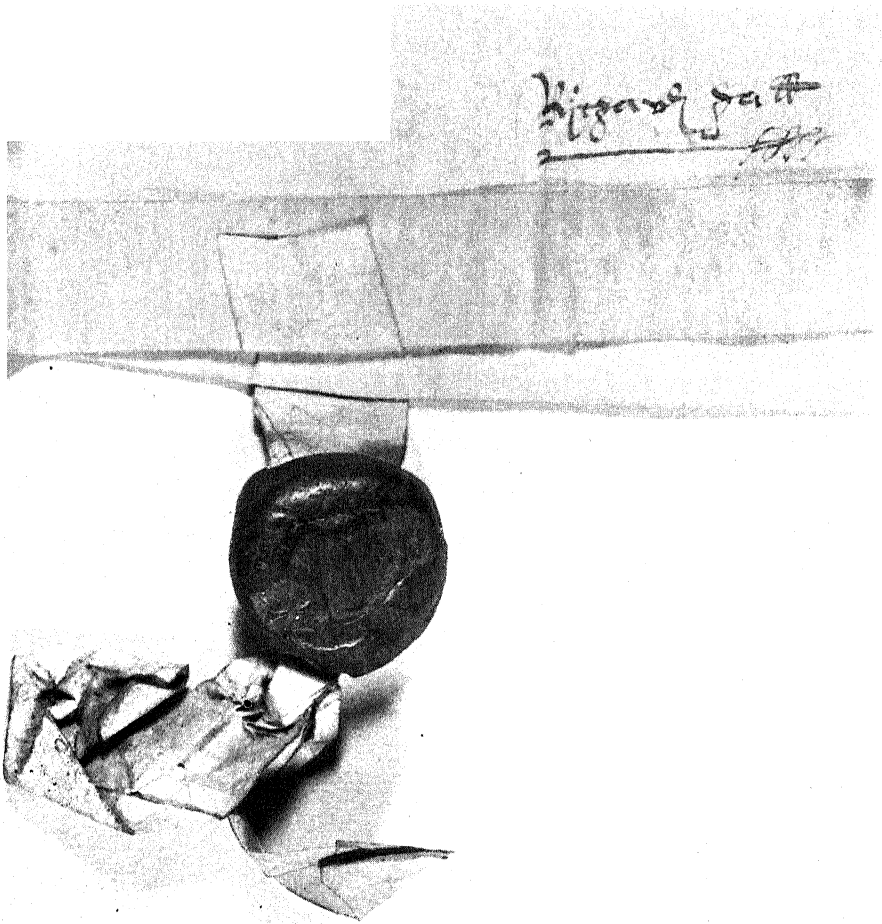
*mentioned Richard Hall of Idlicote There is only one interesting association with the name which I have found in the Public Records At the same time as the search was being made by Sir Thomas Lucy and Thomas Wilkes in the house of Edward Grant, of Northbrookes, a search was made of "Hall's House of Idlicote", as if something suspicious were expected to be found there*¹ *Wilkes says they found nothing there but the mother of Somerville, who was so ill in body and mind as to be past remembrance This proves a considerable intimacy with the Somerville family of Ederston [Edstone], a probable connection with Hugh Hall, the priest, and a certainty of Catholicism, which would give a natural reason for the foreign education and travel of John Hall He has been supposed to have shown Puritan tendencies, but if so it was a Puritanism that did not eschew Catholicism.*

For a long period during my subsequent researches it seemed almost certainly to be proved that Dr John Hall was the son of the Richard Hall to whom Mrs Stopes referred, and with whom the present chapter is mainly concerned Such proof would add considerably to the various interests of these documents Eventually, however, the cleaning of the red-wax seal attached to the schedule² of 6 Sep 1582, signed by Richard Hall himself—which seal had long been thickly coated with dust, revealed the eagle displayed, being the arms—argent, an eagle displayed gules—of "Hall of South Newington and Banbury"³ To this fact had to be added the evidence, which was forthcoming later, of

¹ The day after the apprehension of Edward Arden, of Park Hall State Papers Dom Eliz vol LXIII, p 55

² HCC 386 Cf p 112

³ Vis Gloucs (1623), p 145 In Vis Gloucs (1682-1683), p 157, the marriage of Elizabeth Hall and Walter Savage is again duly recorded, but the arms of Hall are not given on this occasion



H.C.C. 386

SIGNATURE AND SEAL OF RICHARD HALL, 1582

the eagle displayed on the Hall monument in Swerford church—to which further reference is made—and the knowledge that Dr John Hall actually bore sable, three talbots' heads erased argent, as is still evidenced on his gravestone in Stratford-upon-Avon church

Thus, after all said and done, the origin of Dr John Hall still remains uncertain. Even so, there is every reason for believing that Shakespeare and Richard Hall were well acquainted with one another, and we already know certainly that Shakespeare made a bequest to the grandson—Walter Reynolds—of Richard Hall's wife

The earliest Hanley Court document¹ connected with this branch of the family of Hall of Banbury evidences that a Richard Hall was living at Swerford—a village romantically situated in the valley of the Swere, between Banbury and Chipping Norton, co Oxon—in October, 1412

In September, 1463,² another Richard Hall was living at South Newington—a parish immediately adjacent to Swerford. He may be synonymous with the Richard Hall who was buried in Swerford³ church in 1508, and of whom it is recorded in the Visitation of Oxfordshire (1574)—under Hall of Banbury—that “Around the verge of a raised monument of freestone in the chancel of Swerford church is the following inscription

Hic jacet Richardus Halle armiger, qui feliciter ex hac luce migravit XI die mbris in 1508

This “raised monument”, as such, has now entirely disappeared, but in the floor of the chancel there is, at the present

¹ H C C 358/2

² H C C 360

³ The Rev H F Wilson, present Rector of Swerford, is unable to trace any early reference to the family of Hall in his registers, which do not begin until 1577

time, a mutilated slab which has on its north side, where it has not been cut away, part of an inscription, as follows

us Halle armiger qui feliciter

This must be a part of the inscription recorded in the Visitation, wherein it is also noted that the family of Hall of Banbury bore arms "quarterly 1 and 4 an eagle displayed gules 2 and 3 a chevron untinged", and that "this coat appears to be the arms of Richard Hall as engraved upon a monument in Swerford Church"

There then follows an interval of some seventy-four years, after which comes the first of these documents in which there is reference to Stratford-upon-Avon. This is an indenture¹ dated 20 May, 1537, made between Edward Hall, of Swerford, co Oxford, and Elizabeth, his wife, and William Phillips, and Anne, his wife, of Stratford-upon-Avon, concerning the lease for forty years at 23s 6d per year, of a close, "at Stratford towne" between a close of Henry Dawtar and a close of the said William Phillips

The presence of this document amongst Richard Hall's papers is attributable to the fact that the said Edward and Elizabeth Hall were his father and mother. The next succeeding document² is there for the reason that, as already noted, the said Richard Hall eventually married Joyce (*née* Blount), the widow of Hugh Reynolds of Stratford-upon-Avon. By it on 20 Aug 1551, Hugh Reynolds, for love of his wife Joyce, daughter of Walter Blount, esquire, and other good causes moving him, conveys certain property to Robert Blount, of Astley, co Worcester,

1 H C C 383

2 H C C 384

John Combes, of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman, William Smythe, and Adrian Quyny

The property thus conveyed consisted of two messuages, two gardens, one hundred acres of land, twenty-six acres of meadow, and twelve acres of pasture, in Shottery, and in Drayton, an adjoining hamlet, which property Hugh Reynolds had lately had in exchange from Sir Richard Catesby, a close and half a virgate of land in Shottery, lately purchased of George Slater *alias* Biddle, late of Balsall, co Warwick, a messuage, and appurtenances in Drayton, late in the possession of John Higgs, a burgage with a barn and a pigeon-house built over it in Windsor-street, in Stratford-upon-Avon, and finally a burgage in Church-street, Stratford-upon-Avon, in which Hugh Reynolds then dwelt

After the decease of Hugh and Joyce Reynolds all this property is to come to Hugh Reynolds, the firstborn son of the said Hugh Reynolds, and so in order of reversion to Thomas, the second son, and to Katherine, Anne and Frances, daughters

William Mynkes, draper and victualler, and Richard Symonds¹, scrivener and lawyer, the first Town Clerk—both being of Stratford-upon-Avon—are appointed attorneys, and Hugh Reynolds executes the conveyance. Possession of the property was given on the Feast of St Bartholomew (24 Aug) 1551, in the presence of William Richardson, senior, John Gregson, Ralph Crofts, Thomas Barbor, John Smyth, William Richardson, junior, Thomas Barbor, junior, Thomas Sawbridge and many others

On 26 Oct 1553, a certain Richard Hall, of Little Compton, co Gloucester, gentleman, leases² to Thomas Buggie *alia*

¹ Cf Rev E I Fripp, *Shakespeare's Stratford*, pp 40-2

² HCC 354

Hosier, of Swerford, co Oxon, husbandman, and Marian, his wife, one yard-land "in Hoeknorton feilde in the east side of Hoeknorton parke"

The above Richard Hall may have been synonymous with Richard Hall of Idlicote, to whom we now come

So, dated 1 Jan 1557/8, there is an indenture¹ made between Richard Hall, of Idlicote, gentleman, and Anthony Throckmorton, esquire, and Thomas Winchester, concerning the lease of property at Utlicote *alias* Idlicote, at Stratford-upon-Avon, and at Swerford and Hooknorton, co Oxon This indenture is executed by "Richard Hauille".

On 3 Oct 1563, Richard Hall, of Idlicote, gentleman, and Joyce, his wife, lease² to Richard Osbaldeston, of Swerford, gentleman, a capital messuage called Lyons Place, at Swerford, then in the tenure of George and Mary Osbaldeston, father and mother of the said Richard Osbaldeston The name and the site of Lyons Place are now both unknown at Swerford The Halls were connected by marriage with the Osbaldestons of Chadlington³ In this lease Edward Hall, father of the said Richard Hall, is mentioned, but his place of residence is not given

It will appear later that, on 3 Feb 1564/5, Richard Hall leased property at Idlicote from the infamous Lodwicke or Ludovic Greville,⁴ who eventually suffered the terrible penalty of being pressed to death, on 14 Nov 1589

In the Lay Subsidy Roll of the Hundred of Kineton, 1567—

¹ H C C 336

² H C C 355/1

³ John Osbaldeston, of Long Compton, co Warwick, by his will (P C C 35, Dixey), proved on 18 April, 1594, appointed "my especial good friend and loving cousin, Mr Richard Hall, of Idlicote" to be an overseer of his bequests

⁴ Cf Mrs C C Stopes, *Shakespeare's Warwickshire Contemporaries*, pp 162-4

1568,¹ Richard Hall appears under Idlicote, his assessment for lands, being the second highest, and for goods the highest, of the four people thus associated with that parish

In 1567 Richard Hall was a witness to the will²—which, together with the inventory, may safely be said to be in his (Hall's) own handwriting—of Christopher Clyffe, husbandman, of Idlicote, and he was also an appraiser of the testator's possessions Both the will—which contains a bequest to Anne Burbage of Idlicote—and the inventory commence with the Holy Name, which may signify that Clyffe was a Roman Catholic

On 10 July, 1568, Roger Frewen, of Hanley Castle, co Worcester, acknowledges³ the receipt of thirty-five shillings from Richard Hall, being his (Frewen's) wife's annuity and jointure She was the daughter of Edmund Bartlett, of Castle Morton, but the receipt supplies no evidence as to Richard Hall's connection with this matter

On 6 Sep 1582, a marriage settlement⁴ was drawn up between Richard Hall, of Idlicote, and Joyce Hall, his wife, and also between Walter Savage⁵ [of Broadway, co Worcester], one of the sons of Anne Daston, widow, wife of Anthony Daston, esquire, deceased—and formerly the wife of Francis Savage [of Elmley Castle, co Worcester], esquire, also deceased—and Elizabeth Savage, now wife of the said Walter Sayage, and heiress apparent of the said Richard Hall⁶

By this deed Richard Hall conveys to Anne Daston, William

¹ H C C 334 This Roll has been transcribed for publication by the Dugdale Society

² H C C 337

³ H C C 338

⁴ H C C 386

⁵ His sister, Mary, married Thomas Combes, of the family of Combes of Stratford-upon-Avon (Vis Warwick, 1619)

⁶ By his marriage with Joyce Reynolds, Richard Hall had a second daughter, Mary, who married Richard Buller, of Halford, co Warwick

Savage, esquire, and Anthony Savage, gentleman—two of the sons of the said Anne Daston and brothers of the aforesaid Walter Savage—the farm in Swerford, called Lyons Place, and a close called New Close and two other closes called Lyons Closes, with land, etc., in Hooknorton, and Alveston, co Warwick, and also two messuages and three closes in Stratford-upon-Avon

To this document a schedule is attached, “containing the effects and dates of the leases to be excepted”, arranged thus

(i) 1575–1576 Mar 20 From Richard Hall to John Loxley, of a messuage in Stratford-upon-Avon

(ii) 1555 Mar 25 From Richard Hall to Robert Alcocke and to Thomas Alcocke, and Agnes, his wife, deceased, of a messuage and land in Alveston and Tidmington

(iii) 1562 Ap 20 From William Jefferyes, of Stratford-upon-Avon, yeoman, to Nicholas Barnehurst, of Stratford-upon-Avon, woollen-draper, of a close “lyinge by the Ryver of Avon betwixte the close comonly called Bylles close and the greate Bridge late in the tenure of one Roger Sadler,¹ of Stretforde-upon-Avon”

(iv) 1563 Oct 3 The aforementioned lease of Lyons Place, in Swerford

This schedule is signed by Richard Hall, and bears the seal to which reference has been already made ²

Livery and seisin of the property above-mentioned was given, according to an endorsement, by Richard Hall to Anthony Savage, in the presence of Richard Daston, Anthony Langston,³

¹ He was the uncle of Hamlet or Hamnet Sadler, who was godfather to Shakespeare's son, Hamnet, and a witness to and legatee of his will

² Cf p 106

³ Probably the father of Anthony Langston, Town Clerk of Stratford-upon-Avon in 1617 (cf p 4)

Richard Buller, John Cotterell and Philip Pryor, who sign their names

An undated document¹—it may have been written on 26 Oct 1582—as of particular interest, as an instance of English as quarrelled and spelt a few miles from Stratford-upon-Avon at that period

Altogether this document—which throughout is in the excellent handwriting of Hercules Raynesford,² esquire, of Clifford Chambers, co Gloucester—does not help to present a very attractive figure in Richard Hall. However, when the quarrel took place about the furze, he seems to have been in the company of people, some of whom, at least, were already prejudiced against him

Raynesford wrote thus

The wordes which passed betweene Raphe Gybbes³ and Rycharde Hall, gentlemen, at Shipston uppon Stower, the xxvjth of October, laste paste, before me Hercules Raynsforde, and others as followethe

ffyrste, the saide Gybbes tooke an occasyon of quarrell to the sayde Hall sayenge, Serra,⁴ howe chance thou carriedeste my ffurses awaye, Hawll answered Serra, y^e was as lawfull for me to carry them awaye wthout thy Consente, as y^e was for the to fawll them

¹ H C C 369

² Cf Alfred Ransford, *Ransford Associations with Shakespeare, Southampton and Hall*, Notes and Queries, vol. CLII, pp 291 *et seq*. Hercules Raynesford died on 2 Aug 1583, aged thirty-nine. There is an interesting brass to his memory in Clifford Chambers church. Cf C T Davies, *Monumental Brasses of Gloucestershire*, pp 172–5, with illustrations

³ This may have been a Gybbes of Honington (cf H C C 334, Lay Subsidy Roll of the Hundred of Kineton, 1567–1568)

⁴ “Sirrah! you shall buy this sport as dear as all the metal in your shop will answer”, ‘Comedy of Errors’, Act IV, Sc 1

wthout my Consente, Gybbes answered, yf I had bynne theare thou shouldeste not have carried them, for all thy longe byll [hook], Hawll answered I woulde, yf I coude have carried them, yf not, I woulde have lefte them behinde, Serra sayde Gybbes, agayne thou sayeste I owe thee money, sayde hawll, yf I sayde soe, I will saye soe agayne, and Justyfie yt Yf thou sayeste soe sayde Gybbes, thou lyeste, I owe thee none, nor nonne will I paye thee, and that thou thinkest I owe thee, gett yt as thou cannest Then Gybbes multiplyed other unseemely wordes agaynste Hawll, wth theise speaches sayenge, thou arte a busye and brabblinge ffellowe in every mans Cawse, w^{ch} thou intrudeste thy selfe into, and wylte bee of boothe sydes and have a brybe of bothe p'ties, and arte knownen to bee a Common brabler,¹ and a comon bryber, Hawll demaunded of Gybbes, who sayethe soe, doeste thou speake yt of thy owne knowledge, or of reportes, yf yt bee of thy owne knowledge, thou doeste belye me, yf yt bee uppon anie others reportes, they doe belye me, yf hee bee better then my selfe by fyve hundred markes or nere, and sayenge hee would prove himselfe nyther brabler nor bryber, Gybbes sayde, aske ffawkenere, whether thou bee not a bryber or not, Hawll answered hee had deserved better wordes at his handes then those, Gybbes saide hee was never behouldinge to Hawll of yd, Hawle sayde settinge thy lyvinge asyde, I take my selfe as good a manne as Gybbes, in anie place of Englande, Then sayde Gybbes, I scorne thee greatly, and yf yt weare not for some Cawses thou shouldeste knowe yt at which tyme my selfe Hercules Raynsforde syttinge by, wth one Bentley, who was coppienge of a letter w^{ch} the Deane of Worcester had sente me, and others, w^{ch} Bentley seemed greatly to myslyke wth Hawll for answeringe Gybbes, and saide in some anger, hee marveyled

¹ "We hold our time too precious to be spent with such a brabler", 'King John', Act v, Sc 2

*Mr Gybbes woulde suffer Hawll soe to answere hym and wysshed
Gybbes woulde stryke Hawle, wth other speaches of greate dyslyke
agaynste Hawll*

[Signed] *By me Hercules Raynsforde
William Parker his marke
lyonell wilkynson his marke
Richard Cannynge his marke*

Another document directly associated with Richard Hall is a letter¹ written on 2 Aug 1586, by William Somerville, and addressed "To his very loveinge coozin Mr Richard Hall at Idlycote " It concerns the reaping and carrying of certain corn at North Piddle, co Worcester, and mentions "Mr Gybbes" and "Mr Washboorne"

On 15 Aug 1587² Richard Hall, of Idlicote, gentleman, and Walter Savage, of Broadway, gentleman, entered into an indenture with Richard Lane, of Bridgetown, Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman This indenture recites an earlier deed of feoffment, dated 6 Sep 1582, concerning the marriage settlement between Richard Hall and Joyce, his wife, and Walter Savage and Elizabeth, his wife, one of the daughters of the said Richard Hall Thereby Richard Hall gave to Anne Daston, widow, William Savage, esquire, and Anthony Savage, gentleman, amongst other things, a messuage and two yard-lands in Alveston, on the Avon near Stratford, late in the occupation of Robert Alcocke, now of Tiddington, co Warwick This Alveston property is now conveyed to Richard Lane who executes (Plate XVI) the indenture, which is endorsed with the signatures of Richard Godboulde, Thomas Savage, Anthony Nash and Thomas Watkys

Incidentally it may be noted that this Richard Lane, on 26 Jan 1596/7, witnessed the deed of sale¹ by John Shakespeare—father of William Shakespeare—to George Badger, of property in Henley-street, Stratford-upon-Avon, which deed contains definite proof that John Shakespeare resided in the house now known as “Shakespeare’s Birthplace” He was also the Richard Lane, esquire, now of Alveston, who, in the records of the Stratford-upon-Avon Corporation, comes first of the three complainants to the Lord Chancellor about the year 1609, regarding Stratford tithes, his fellow-complainants being Thomas Grene, of Stratford-upon-Avon, esquire, and William Shackspeare, of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman

Anthony Nash, one of the signatories to this aforementioned Alveston conveyance was, of course, a very intimate friend of William Shakespeare and, under his will, received a bequest of 26s 8d wherewith to buy a memorial ring He owned land at Welcombe, and had a share in the tithes On 1 May, 1602, he was a witness to the conveyance² of one hundred and seven acres of land in Old Stratford from William and John Combe to Shakespeare, and also in 1605 of the conveyance³ to Shakespeare of the moiety of a lease, granted in 1544, of the tithes of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Welcombe and Bishopton He was also a witness to the bond (24 July, 1605) for £80 made by Ralph Huband, of Ipsley, to William Shakespeare, for the due performance of the covenants in the preceding document, and to the articles of agreement made on 28 Oct 1614, between William Shakespeare and William Replingham, concerning

¹ Wellstood, *op cit* p 28

² *Ibid* pp 29–30

³ *Ibid* pp 31–4

of added and so added in the paper

It was said
It was said

It was said

Lyons Place

Lyons Place

W. S.

Shakespeare's interests in the tithes of Welcombe Anthony Nash was buried at Stratford-upon-Avon on 18 Nov 1622, and four years later his eldest son and heir, Thomas, became the first husband of Shakespeare's granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall

• At the same time, 15 Aug 1587, the said Richard Hall, Walter Savage and Anthony Nash, of Welcombe, in the parish of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentlemen, were parties to the lease¹ to Anthony Nash of the property detailed in the aforementioned marriage settlement of 1582

About this period there are two other documents² in which the name of Richard Hall is mentioned

Later, on 1 June, 1591, Richard and Joyce Hall, together with Walter and Elizabeth Savage, of Broadway, and Richard Buller, of Halford, co Warwick, and Mary, his wife, lease³ to John Bonner, of Swerford, gentleman, the aforesaid "capital messuage called Lyons Place" This indenture is executed by John Bonner The seal has disappeared The witnesses (Plate XV) were Richard Daston, Richard Savage,⁴ Edmund Whyte, Henry Brandon, William Ramseye (his mark), and finally. "W S"—those alluring initials—whoever he may have been

In an Inquisition Post Mortem⁵ of Humphrey Holden, of Erdington, co Warwick, gentleman, dated 26 Sep 1600, Richard Hall is named first of the sixteen jurors

On 10 Aug 1601, Richard Hall entered into an indenture⁶ with William Rose, of Halford, co Warwick, concerning lands there and in the neighbouring hamlet of Newbold, co Worcester, which Hall had lately bought of John Hanwell, of Bexley, co Kent

¹ H C C 388

² H C C 361 and 366

³ H C C 356, cf also H C C 357

⁴ Obviously both these signatures were written by the same hand

⁵ H C C 370

⁶ H C C 371

A little more than a year afterwards, on 22 Aug 1602, the Idlicote register records the death of "Mr Richard Hall",¹ who was buried four days later. By his death most of his property passed into the possession of his elder daughter Elizabeth, who has a special place in the Broadway register, where there is an entry under the year 1560-1561—although for some reason, it was certainly made at a much later period—that "Elizabeth, daughter of Mr Richard Hall was baptized on the 24th day of February in the parish church of Stratford-upon-Avon in the County of Warwick, and was the sole wife of Mr Walter Savage of this parish". In the Stratford-upon-Avon register the original entry of this baptism gives it as having taken place ten days earlier, on 14 Feb 1560/1.

Through this marriage of Elizabeth Hall with Walter Savage, the Hall documents joined the series of deeds of Savage and other property in Broadway. Ultimately, after several generations, as already shown,² they came—through the marriage of Cecilia Oldys, firstly with a later Walter Savage, and secondly with John Newport—to Hanley Court, the home of the Newports.

Elizabeth Hall—as thus she shall still be known—married, as her second husband, Simon Underhill, also of Idlicote. Together they filed a complaint³ in the Court of Chancery, on 24 Jan 1638, from which it appears incidentally that towards the end of the sixteenth century Richard Hall had possessed, amongst other property, three closes in Stratford-upon-Avon, called Square meadow, Washie meadow, and a little meadow adjoining. They refer to the conveyance⁴ dated 6 Sep 1582, and add that eventu-

¹ His will is not traceable

² Cf Introduction

³ P R O C 2, Chas I, U 8/50, also C 2 Chas I, S 71/44

⁴ Cf p 111

ally the property was sold by Simon Underhill to Thomas Nash, of Stratford-upon-Avon, esquire, for £340 Simon Underhill, they say, also—about two years ago—sold his house and lands at Idlicote to Sir Hercules Underhill for £2000

Nash, in his answer, corrects the price of the first property to £345, and says that he and John Hall, late of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman, purchased it jointly The date is not given, but very probably the transaction took place about the time of Nash's marriage with Shakespeare's granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall Her father, the aforesaid John Hall—that *medicus peritissimus* of the Stratford-upon-Avon register—died on 25 Nov 1635, aged sixty, and Nash, who had made quite a perplexing will, died on 4 April, 1647, being buried very close to Shakespeare

Returning to the Hall documents, there is now a long interval of time, the next document being dated 30 Sep 1632 This is an indenture¹ made between William Sheldon, of Broadway, co. Worcester, esquire—administrator of the property of Walter Savage, late of Broadway, deceased—and Walter Savage, of Broadway, esquire, grandchild of the aforesaid Walter Savage, and Simon Underhill, of Idlicote, esquire It recites that Lodwicke Greville, of Milcote, co Warwick, esquire, deceased, by indenture dated 3 Feb 1564/5, made between him and Richard Hall, of Idlicote, gentleman, deceased, leased for two hundred years to the said Richard Hall, certain specified property at Idlicote, including "the hall greene", and on 20 Jan 1591/2 the said Richard Hall, by indenture made between him and the said Walter Savage, deceased, released the property to Walter Savage from the date of his [Richard Hall's] death until Michaelmas,

1750 [*sic*] By this present indenture the property is released to Simon Underhill, whose then place of residence is not given. He signs the indenture, to which a large fragment of a ring-seal of red wax is still pendent, upon which the three trefoils of the Warwickshire family of Underhill are embossed, bordered by some broken lettering.

The above-named Walter Savage, one of the parties to the indenture, died on 24 June, 1640, in his thirty-fifth year, to whose memory his widow, Mary, placed a monument on the south wall of the chancel of the old church at Broadway. The monument is still there, and has lately been renovated and the inscription¹ relettered at the cost of Colonel G. R. Rolls Savage.

On 3 March, 1648, this Mary Savage, of Broadway, widow and sole executrix of Walter Savage, entered into an indenture² with John Rudd, gentleman, and Sir Hercules Underhill, both of Idlicote, by which she leased to them certain specified property at Idlicote, Brailes, Oxhill and Whatcote. This indenture is executed by Sir Hercules Underhill (Plate XVI) and by John Rudd.

Hercules Underhill is of particular interest, as it was he who, on attaining his majority in May, 1602, completed in a new deed³ the transfer of New Place, Stratford-upon-Avon—then the second largest house in the town—to William Shakespeare. He was the son of William Underhill, the original vendor to Shakespeare. This William Underhill died suddenly of poison at Fillongley, near Coventry, in 1597, and was buried at Idlicote, before the legal transfer to Shakespeare had been completed.

¹ Cf. Nash, *Worcestershire*, vol. 1, p. 146.

² H.C.C. 341.

³ Cf. Tucker Brooke, *Shakespeare of Stratford*, pp. 20-2, 42-3.

Hugh Reynolds

H.C.C. 384

HUGH REYNOLDS SENR. 1551

Richard Lane

H.C.C. 364

RICHARD LANE, 1586

Anthony Nash

ANTHONY NASH, 1586

Hercules Underhill

H.C.C. 341

SIR HERCULES UNDERHILL, 1648

IDLICOTE, CO WARWICK

Underhill's eldest son, Fulke,¹ died shortly afterwards whilst still a minor and was buried at Idlicote. After his death Fulke Underhill was proved to have poisoned his father, and the family estates were thus liable to forfeiture, but they were suffered to pass to Fulke's next brother, the aforesaid Sir Hercules, who was thus able to complete the transfer above mentioned. New Place, of course, under Shakespeare's will, eventually passed to his daughter, Susanna Hall.

Hercules Underhill was knighted at Compton Wynyates in 1625, and in the times of the Great Civil War he compounded as a Roman Catholic recusant. He died in 1657.

¹ Baptized at Idlicote, 28 Jan 1578, buried, 21 March, 1598

CHAPTER X

MISCELLANEA

AMONGST documents of miscellaneous interest the earliest in this Collection is the inventory,¹ made 11 Nov 1536, of the possessions of a certain Robert Burbage, a farmer at Idlicote. It is usually suggested that James Burbage (d 1597), of Shoreditch—father of Richard Burbage (1569²–1619), the actor of chief parts in Shakespeare's plays—came of a Warwickshire family.³ A family of that name was settled at Stratford-upon-Avon at that period, and it was then numerous and represented in Warwickshire and Worcestershire and in other neighbouring counties.

However, it has not proved possible to establish any connection between these Warwickshire Burbages and the Burbages of Shoreditch. It is well known that other of Shakespeare's fellows also bore Warwickshire names—such as Nicholas Tooley, William Slye and Augustine Phillips—but they again defy research as to their origin.

It seems that Sir Thomas Cawarden, who was Master of the Revels from 1544 to 1559, held the manors of Idlicote and of Loxley, the latter being some four miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, by patent of a grant in tail male, dated 28 March, 1542.³ This makes an interesting association, still presenting possibilities, for Sir Thomas had much influence with the stage generally at that time, and his name with that of his wife, Dame Elizabeth—both then long since deceased—is incidentally mentioned in

¹ HCC 335

² Cf Mrs Stopes, *Burbage and Shakespeare's Stage*

³ *Hist MSS Com Seventh Report*, 1879

connection with James Burbage's purchase of premises at Blackfriars in 1596, "to convert into a common playhouse"¹

On 26 March, 1556,² Thomas Phillips, of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman, conveys to Thomas Dixson *alias* Waterman, of Stratford-upon-Avon, yeoman, and William Court, of Alcester, yeoman, half a burgage, with a garden in "le burgestrete" between a tenement formerly belonging to "the College of Stretford", and the house of George Quyny. The witnesses to this transaction are John Burbage, Bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon, and Richard Coton, Philip Gale, Richard Wyngfilde, Ralph Downe, and others

An undated document³ of interest concerns the sale of the corn tithes of Shottery. This document, which is in a fragmentary state, bears the signature of Sir John Conway,⁴ and may be dated c. 1560. It contains reference to a lawsuit whereby Sir John Conway or Richard Conysbie are seeking to recover the said tithes. Mention is also made of William Lewes, Charles Beynton, Thomas Reynolds and Roger Sadler.

Sir John Conway, of Arrow, co. Warwick, had been knighted in 1559, and died in 1603, and Richard Conysbie was one of the Conysbies of Ipsley, co. Warwick. William Lewes was Alderman Lewes ap Williams to whom, as also to Alderman Roger Sadler and Charles Beynton—Adrian Quiney's stepson—there are various references in the records of the Stratford-upon-Avon Corporation.

Thomas Reynolds was probably "Mr Thomas Reynolds, gent", of Old Stratford, who died on 8 Sep. 1613. If so, he was

¹ E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, vol. II, pp. 480-93. There is a tradition that Queen Elizabeth stayed at Idlicote during one of her progresses through England.

² H. C. C. 385.

³ H. C. C. 389.

⁴ Cf. Mrs Stopes, *Shakespeare's Warwickshire Contemporaries*, pp. 111-22.

the father of William Reynolds, gentleman, one of the four Stratford-upon-Avon friends to whom Shakespeare left money to buy memorial rings

This fragmentary reference to the tithes of Shottery recalls the fact that Shakespeare was interested in the purchase of land at Shottery¹ in 1598, and also the later trouble that he had—particularly between 1609 and 1612—in the matter of his lease of a moiety of the tithes of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe, which as already shown he had bought in July, 1605, of Ralph Huband, lord of the manor of Ipsley

A lease² dated 6 Oct 1577, to one Thomas Coles, of a messuage, etc., at Wynterton *alias* Wynderton, near Brailes, co Warwick, is executed by Francis Throckmorton,³ whose tomb is in Ullenhall Church, co Warwick. In this lease he is described as of the Inner Temple, gentleman, son and heir apparent of Michael Throckmorton, late of London, deceased. One of the witnesses is Thomas Throckmorton.

On 20 May, 1583, depositions⁴ were taken at Stratford-upon-Avon before Edward Bushell, Richard Hall and Robert Wincott, gentlemen, being the appointed commissioners in a suit concerning a bequest of land at Wallington, near Barcheston, made by one Thomas Mason. The defendants were John Beedon *alias* Mason and William Hawks. Neither the identity of the plaintiff nor of the defendants is revealed, and there are no accompanying interrogatories. The depositions are duly signed by Richard Hall as one of the commissioners.

The first deponent is Robert Hill,⁵ parson of Barcheston (co

¹ Cf Lee, *op cit* p 293

² H C C 363

³ Cf Mrs Stopes, *op cit* pp 134–60

⁴ H C C 387

⁵ He was defendant in a lawsuit a few years later, in which Richard Hyckes was plaintiff. Cf E A B Barnard and A J B Wace, *The Sheldon Tapestry-Weavers and their Work*, *Archaeologia*, vol LXXVIII, pp 268–70

Warwick) near Shipston-upon-Stour He is followed by Thomas Blackford, who refers to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, and Humphrey Petoe, of Chesterton, co Warwick, Justices of Assize

John Thornett says a bond was made to Thomas Mason for the payment of three score pounds by Nicholas Tooley, and William Hanches, of Sibford Gower, co Oxon, also deposes The depositions are signed by Richard Hall alone There are no documents at the Public Record Office relevant to this suit.

This Nicholas Tooley lived at Burmington, a mile or so from Barcheston, where his family-name was represented for many years He has been wrongly claimed on more than one occasion as being identical with Nicholas Tooley, one of Shakespeare's fellows Collier¹ is inclined to think that Nicholas Tooley may have come originally from Warwickshire, and Dr W K W Chafy² makes the following statement "On the last day of October, 1598, Brigett, sister to Sir John Rous, was married at Rous Lench to Thomas Tooley, of Burmington, and Nicholas Tooley, mentioned in the Burmington Registers, was one of Shakespeare's associates on the Stage, though in this connexion, it is to be noted that he signed his Will 'Nicholas Wilkinson alias Tooley'"

However, this will,³ which Nicholas Tooley made on 3 June, 1623, when lodging with Cuthbert Burbage at Holywell-street, Shoreditch, produces no evidence of testator's Warwickshire origin and, apart from the fact⁴ that a certain Thomas Tooley of Burmington married Bridget Rous, it would seem that there is nothing to support the aforementioned statement

¹ *Op cit* p 233

² *Short History of Rous Lench* (co Worcester), pp 19-20

³ P C C 53 Byrde The Burmington registers begin in 1582

⁴ Rous Lench register, and their marriage-bond (*Cal Worcs Wills*, vol 1, p 391)

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